

The Clean Energy Council supports a Voice to Parliament

The Clean Energy Council supports an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Voice to Parliament, and a 'yes' vote in the 2023 referendum.

The clean energy industry is committed to ensuring First Nations Australians' voices are heard and play a significant role in the clean energy revolution. Australia now has a momentous opportunity to commit to partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities indefinitely, uniting Australia in a way never seen before.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart, delivered to by the Referendum Council in 2017 following national consultation and regional dialogues, calls for the permanent recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia's constitution by enshrining a First Nations Voice in the Constitution.

The 2023 referendum is Australia's chance to recognise and embed the voices and cultures of Indigenous Peoples in the Constitution, to share in and learn from over 65,000 years of history and connection to Country, and to recognise that First Nations peoples are best placed to guide decisions that affect them and their communities.

To paraphrase the Uluru Statement from the Heart: by being officially considered part of the Australian population as a result of the referendum in 1967, First Nations communities were finally counted, and through the Voice to Parliament they must finally be heard.

The Clean Energy Council is focused on ensuring our organisation – through our Reconciliation Action Plan - and industry is culturally prepared to demonstrate its commitment to reconciliation and to partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in working towards Australia's clean energy future. We recognise First Nation's right to sovereignty and agency, as well as the mutual benefits gained from strong and respectful relationships, working in partnership, and ongoing learning.

In particular, the clean energy industry recognises that the transition to clean energy will depend on working collaboratively and constructively with Traditional Owners of the land on which many renewable projects will be housed. For the transition to be truly just, engagement with and the inclusion of First Nations communities is essential. Clean energy presents an enormous opportunity for First Nations communities to help guide the future of Australia's green economy, as well as creating jobs on Country and provide low-cost power to remote communities.

But it's about much more than technology. It's about collaboration and partnership. The Voice to Parliament will provide First Nations Australians a representative body to provide input into federal government decisions, policies and laws that affect their lives, and crucially will enshrine these rights in the Constitution forever.

We encourage you to vote 'yes' in the upcoming referendum, and to walk with First Nations peoples for a better future.

