



First Nations Voice to Parliament: walking alongside our Indigenous partners for climate, nature and history repair

Ahead of the 2023 Referendum, the Carbon Market Institute (CMI), announces its support in walking alongside our Indigenous partners and voicing support for a constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice to Parliament.

As an independent, member-based institute accelerating the transition to net-zero emissions, a central component of the CMI mission is to champion best practice in an inclusive transition that delivers social, economic, and environmental benefits to communities. CMI supports and respects the internationally proclaimed human rights of First Nations Australians as enshrined in numerous international commitments.¹ Accordingly, we are proud to formally support the proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament as a way of respecting the right to self-determination underpinned in these universal commitments and as a fundamental step in our country's reconciliation journey.

Elevating First Nations Voices supports human rights and the aspirations of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples

The Uluru Statement From the Heart, and its associated pillars of Voice, Makarrata, and Treaty outline Indigenous aspirations and how recognition in the Constitution through the Voice can help make self-determined practical changes in their lives and create better opportunities for future generations. Whilst the Native Title system gives some rights and land ownership back to First Nations people, it is complex and insufficient in providing full rights and interests. The Voice provides a unique opportunity for First Nations governance and leadership. We must formally engage their voices in decision making and the halls of power.

Elevating First Nations Voices advances the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 'Closing the Gap' Agenda

Constitutional recognition is both a powerful statement but also a driver of practical and necessary social and economic development change. At an international level, a Voice to Parliament aligns with relevant UN-led SDGs. Equally, at a domestic level the Closing the Gap reports outline current disadvantages to Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities and priorities that therein can be addressed by Indigenous People through the Voice.

Elevating First Nations Voices embeds climate and nature repair into Australia's politics and economy.

Over millennia, Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have successfully managed and cared for the unique habitats and landscapes across our vast continent through their intrinsic relationship with and stewardship of nature. With colonisation, Australia's laws and policies shifted to exclude First Nations people from accessing and managing their own lands. Now, there is an increasing imperative to strengthen and incorporate remaining traditional land management practices into our own environmental practices. Indigenous communities are especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and must be part of the solution, partnering in Australia's response to the climate and biodiversity crisis. Support for the Voice to Parliament has an integral role to play in this significant task of cultural, history and climate repair in front of us.

¹ [The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#), 1996; [Sustainable Development Goals](#), 2015, [The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), 2007; [The UNFCCC Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform](#), 2015.



Over its history, CMI has recognised the intrinsic value of including First Nations voices, and aimed to elevate and amplify these via the services we provide, including through our events schedule, taskforces and working groups, as well as external communication channels. Our 2025 Strategic Plan further reflects the value we place on knowledge shared through dialogue, with the inclusion of diverse perspectives promoted across each of the five pillars of action.

A key aim of the Australian Carbon Industry Code of Conduct, hosted by CMI, is to support and protect relevant Indigenous rights and interests. The Code promotes best practice carbon market integrity, transparency and accountability for participants including the importance of free, prior, and informed consent.²

It is important Australia avoids a backwards-step from the progress already made through collaboration between First Nations communities and those who now call Australia home. **Now is the time to push the dialogue forward, and ensure that we continue to listen to, and learn from our First Nations partners. Now is the time to walk alongside our First Nations partners. Now is the time for a Voice in the constitution.**

² See note 1 and Indigenous Carbon Industry Network [Seeking Free, Prior and Informed Consent from Indigenous Communities for Carbon Projects](#), 2020, and Clean Energy Regulator [Native Title, Legal Right and Eligible-Interest Holder Consent Guidance](#), 2018.