



## MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10<sup>th</sup> June 2022

### **“Talked at and Voices Suppressed” KLC Responds to Cultural Heritage ‘Co-Design’ Process**

The Kimberley Land Council (KLC) says the government is disregarding the views of Aboriginal people during a flawed ‘co-design’ process for new Aboriginal Heritage laws.

KLC CEO Tyronne Garstone refuted claims made by the Aboriginal Affairs minister that the organisation has had any other position on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 (ACHA) from when it was proposed to when it was passed.

“Recent comments by the minister highlight an arrogance from inside the government towards Aboriginal people, and shows how out of touch the minister is with the Aboriginal community views.” Mr Garstone said.

“The KLC has been firm in our position that Aboriginal people are forced to work within a flawed system. The co-design process has been led and directed by the WA Government.”

“In order for this to be a true ‘co-design’ Aboriginal people must be making decisions, and working alongside the government to draft the ACHA regulations. If not, this will be yet another failed ‘tick the box’ consultation,” Mr Garstone warned.

“Aboriginal people are not part of the decision-making process. We continue to be talked at instead of listened to. Our voices continue to be suppressed. As long as this process continues, so will the destruction of Aboriginal heritage.”

Mr Garstone said a government workshop attended by KLC in Perth highlighted the new Act’s failure to make progress from the previous Bill.

“The discussions at the workshop last month highlighted a severe lack of resourcing for the new cultural heritage regime.”

“Several participants raised concerns about the short two-week timeframe provided to stakeholders to submit feedback following the Perth workshop. Other participants walked out of the consultation as they didn’t see the process as culturally appropriate,” Mr Garstone said.

“Participants were also disappointed that Aboriginal Affairs Minister Buti was not present at the two-day workshop in Perth to hear the sentiment in the room first hand, despite Traditional Owners travelling long distances from all around WA to take part.”

“The lack of community awareness about the Government’s consultation workshops is deeply concerning as it means many community members have not been part of the co-design and have not had their voices heard.”

The KLC is joined by other Aboriginal organisations and Traditional Owners around the State expressing disappointment with the consultation process.

**Media contact:**

Gabrielle Timmins, Media Coordinator

M: 0408 436 987 E: [gabrielle.timmins@klc.org.au](mailto:gabrielle.timmins@klc.org.au)

P.O. BOX 2145  
BROOME WA 6725  
Ph: (08) 9194 0100  
[www.klc.org.au](http://www.klc.org.au)