



Kimberley Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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KLC calls for native title transparency

The Kimberley Land Council has called on the Attorney General to support a forum for native title representative bodies and other key stakeholders to properly discuss all of the Government's proposed changes to the Native Title Act.

The request comes following an attempt by the Government to make last minute changes to the *Native Title Amendment (Indigenous Land Use Agreement) Bill* beyond what had been consulted upon with native title representative bodies.

"We are very mindful that people need certainty about their native title agreements and changes to the Native Title Act are required for this to occur," KLC CEO Nolan Hunter said.

"What we do not accept is Government attempting to make last minute changes without consultation with Indigenous people about the very legislation that impacts them the most.

"This process has been rushed from the start and only serves to shine a light on the many other failings of the Native Title Act.

"I urge the Attorney General to support a roundtable meeting of all native title representative bodies and stakeholders to discuss in detail the government's proposed changes, as well as a significant overhaul of the Native Title Act.

"The views of Indigenous people must be given the respect they deserve."

Mr Hunter said the limitations of the Native Title Act are well known and were the subject of an Australian Law Reform Commission Report which has sat idle.

"What we see now is the government reacting very quickly to a problem that could well have been addressed years ago," he said.

"There must be certainty for native title holders, but there is no denying that the changes to the Native Title Act the Government is proposing ultimately provide commercial certainty for big business.

"What we should be asking is, why has this appallingly slow, unfair and costly native title system been able to operate without action by our government for so long?"