



Victorian Traditional Owner
Land Justice Group

The Victorian Traditional Owner Land Justice Group (LJG) is an unincorporated body which provides a voice for traditional owner groups in Victoria. It lobbies governments for improvements to policy, legislation and in how government goes about its business, to achieve greater land justice for all of the traditional owners of Victoria.

July 2008

New settlement framework

Discussions are going well with Government and the Land Justice Group
Page 1

Caring for Country Forum

Read about the forum on natural and cultural resource management held in Melbourne last month
Page 2

Fact Sheets

Read and share with your family the new fact sheets - where you will find out more about the Land Justice Group and the Settlement Framework
Page 1

LJG's new Website

Get online and check out our new website
Page 1

LJG's new magnet

Help us connect with more traditional owners
Page 3

Other News

The Federal Government is consulting now on a new representative national body for Indigenous people
Page 1

The LJG is now online!

The LJG has launched its new website this month. Get on line at www.landjustice.com.au to learn more about:

- the membership of the LJG;
- how it formed;
- the development of a new native title Framework; and
- visit the library and read media releases and submissions that the LJG has made over the last few years on government reform issues.

Meetings continue in efforts to develop a new Settlement Framework for land justice across Victoria

For the first time in many years that the State Government has committed to a genuine collaborative process of overhauling its policy on land justice. Through the Land Justice Group's involvement in the Steering Committee, traditional owners are directly represented and involved in developing recommendations to the Premier and Cabinet, on how best to deliver land justice in Victoria. A new Framework would set out another path to land justice that groups could choose to take.

Fact Sheets

The LJG has produced four **fact sheets** for traditional owners:

1. Our Land Justice Group
2. Steering Committee and Victorian Settlement Framework
3. Q & A on the Settlement Framework
4. Settlement Framework - Be involved

These fact sheets have been mailed out to all traditional owners on the mailing list and are also available on the website. Contact us if you would like copies.

Caring for Country forum



On 13th and 14th June 2008 the Land Justice Group hosted a forum on Caring for Country. It was attended by over fifty traditional owners from across Victoria. It was a very full day and a half of sharing news, frustrations, valuable learning and debate, and ultimately closing with a commitment to unity and goodwill as the way to achieve land justice.

This forum was funded by the Federal department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

International frameworks for Traditional owner rights

Guest speaker Brian Wyatt, chair of the National Native Title Council and Executive Director of the Goldfields Land Council in Western Australia, shared his thoughts on his recent visit to New York for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. He talked about the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Convention on Biological Diversity and the Canadian model for protecting Traditional Knowledge.

State Government's new vision for Land & Biodiversity

State officers attended to advise that the State is consulting with the Victorian public about the future of Victoria's environment. There is an opportunity for traditional owners to lobby for resources for NRM, traditional owner fire management teams and carbon trading reforestation amongst other

things. Submissions will be accepted up until 10 August. You can email submissions on the Green Paper to land.whitepaper@dse.vic.gov.au or post them to the Project Director, Land and Biodiversity White Paper, level 3, 8 Nicholson St East Melbourne 3002. DSE ph 136 186).

Parks Victoria reported on their Business Incubator projects

Mark Riley and Patrick Fricker were keen to share stories of successful traditional owner business ventures operating in Victorian parks and encourage other groups to do the same. For further details you can contact: Patrick Fricker - phone: 0419 336 792; pfricker@parks.vic.gov.au Mark Riley - phone 9488 3964 0438 634 733; mriley@parks.vic.gov.au Wendy Berick Indigenous Employment - phone 3627 4635 0400 873 709 wberick@parks.vic.gov.au



The LJG co-chairs with Brian Wyatt of the national Indigenous lobby group - National Native Title Council (L - R: Len Clarke, Graham Atkinson, Bobby Nicholls & Brian Wyatt)

Commonwealth Caring for our Country funding program

Tom Smith was at the forum to explain the Commonwealth funding opportunities that were available to traditional owners. He stressed the importance of planning. If you'd like some help or advice on this funding you can contact Tom (02 6272 5966; tom.smith@nrm.gov.au).

Statewide representative organisation for traditional owners

There was extensive discussion about the need for a strong, independent traditional owner organisation operating at a state level, building on the work of the unincorporated Land Justice Group. There was a lot of debate about the timing of incorporating - whether to incorporate immediately or wait until further resources are available for developing a solid organisation and enabling greater consultation with traditional owners on corporation and governance issues. There was discussion about a State funded pilot project proposal (Traditional Owner Services Victoria pilot), to look at a statewide traditional owner organisation. Its purpose would be to support the natural resource and cultural heritage management work that local traditional owner groups do. It was agreed that the Land Justice Group needs to consider the incorporation issues further and also consider what further consultation is possible on the pilot project.

Developing a new State Framework for land justice

It was reported that the Steering Committee is working to develop alternative native title settlement options - new State policy. Developing a new State Framework presents a unique opportunity that will allow groups to negotiate more beneficial outcomes than are currently possible. It was stressed that nothing decided by the Steering Committee will affect any traditional owner group without their consent. There are no deals being done over any land in Victoria - only policy issues are being discussed. The Framework will only create more options for groups to consider in the settlement of their land claim business with Government. Read the Fact Sheets enclosed with this newsletter or visit www.landjustice.com.au

New National Indigenous representative body

As you may have heard the Federal Minister Jenny Macklin has begun consultations on what a new national representative body should look like. Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner has already released a HREOC issues paper on a national Indigenous representative body, for the government to consider.

The Government has stated some of the broad principles for a new representative body. These include:

- The representative body will not be another ATSIC
- The body will have urban, regional and remote representation

It will have a clearly defined role and will not replicate existing structures.

The Government will be consulting in all States and has called for written submissions. There is a meeting at Melbourne Town Hall on 29 July. Written submissions are due by 19th September. Further details are available at www.fahcsia.gov.au/IndigenousRepBody or by calling 1800 202 366 (free call). A copy of Tom Calma's paper is also on this website.

The Land Justice Group will be discussing this issue at the next LJC meeting at the end of August. If you have any views that you'd like LJC to include in a submission please contact your LJC member or the Secretariat before 29th August.

**Stick our new magnet
on your fridge and
start a conversation
about land justice over
a cuppa with friends
and family.**

*Victorian Traditional Owners
Land Justice Group*



*Strength in
Solidarity*

www.landjustice.com.au

Upcoming Meetings

The Land Justice Group will be meeting again on Saturday 30th August 2008. In addition to LJC members attending the Co-chairs hope that the State may cover the cost for one additional representative (the deputy if one has been nominated or other) from each group to attend the meeting with their LJC representative. At this meeting the State Steering Committee process will be discussed. The Chair of the Steering Committee, Mick Dodson, will be attending this meeting. The Secretariat will be sending out an agenda information closer to the date. To discuss attendance and arrangements you can talk to either Mark

Brett, Secretariat or Drew Berick who is the Community Liaison Officer helping the Land Justice Group.

Have your family seen this newsletter?

If not, share it around and tell them to get on the mailing list - they can contact Drew Berick to be added.



Community Liaison Officer Drew Berick

Further information

Bobby Nicholls — Co-Chair

Len Clarke — Co-Chair

Graham Atkinson — Co-Chair

Mark Brett — Secretariat

For a full list of Land Justice Group membership please go to www.landjustice.com.au or contact the Secretariat.

Formal business should be addressed to:
Co-Chairs

Land Justice Group Secretariat, Mark Brett

PO Box 431

North Melbourne Victoria 3051

mbrett@ntsv.com.au

Toll free call: 1800 791 779 or (03) 9321 5300