

To whom it may concern

This is my submission to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Acts Review in Queensland.

The wanton destruction at Juukan Gorge (WA) recently is the kind of abuse of cultural heritage, that I, as an ordinary Australian, want to see prevented and made never possible again. This must be defended against in all Australian States and Territories.

The submission invitation says the Queensland Government will use our submissions to “finalise the review of the Cultural Heritage Acts to ensure these Acts continue to protect and conserve Queensland’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, while facilitating business and development activity”.

Why was the last phrase added? “While facilitating business and development activity” negates any attempt “to protect and conserve cultural heritage”.

That clause says that economic considerations are the primary consideration – that “we will protect and preserve, BUT....” It declares Business and Development must be “facilitated”. The values of business and development are economic, and therefore are completely at variance with cultural heritage, whose value is spiritual. That sentence has been craftily worded and tacked onto the end of the commitment to cultural heritage in the sound knowledge that cultural heritage can never trump business and development when considered in an economic framework. Economics place no value on “cultural heritage” but huge value on business and development.

This phrase declares and ensures that all Queenslanders will not be equal, because those who stand for business and development will be held up as “more equal” than those who stand for spiritual and cultural values.

The way the Adani Corporation is being granted carte blanche to assault our environment with full cooperation of the Queensland Government is a prime example of how these economic considerations fail ALL Australians. The rights of millions of people to share and glorify in our outback landscape and its healthy ecosystems for their spiritual and cultural richness are denied, and handed over instead to a single foreign entity for its business and development values. This is unequal ideology, as well as governmental theft on the grandest of scales – fully enabled by the inclusion of that simple phrase, “while facilitating business and development activity”.

Australians have had enough of this exploitative and destructive facilitation. Please let this Review result in bold, meaningful and uncorruptible processes for defending and protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage now and forever, in every part of Queensland.

This can be achieved by removing that clause added at the end of the sentence about ensuring to protect and conserve. Please retract forever these words “while facilitating business and development activity”.

I trust the Queensland Government will uphold the commitment emblazoned across its website: “ We walk together on our shared journey of reconciliation where all Queenslanders will be equal and the diversity of Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities across Queensland are fully recognised, respected and valued by all.”

I stand resolutely behind, and fiercely support, the submission of the Wangan and Jagalingou Nagana Yarrbayn Cultural Custodians to this Review.

Thank you
Yours sincerely
Kammy Cordner Hunt

