

BirdLife Australia statement on the ‘Voice’ Referendum

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BirdLife Australia supports the profound recognition of the rich and diverse cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to the Parliament.

As we forge ahead in our Bird Conservation Strategy 2023-2032, our goal is to stop the extinction crisis and put native birds on the path to recovery. Among the diverse elements of this plan, one significant aspect centres around working with First Nations people and local communities to drive transformational change. We are proud of our existing partnerships with large groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations as we collectively work to achieve the conservation of Australia’s birds.

This collaboration recognises that the First Nations people of Australia hold unique knowledge of and rights to land throughout the country. Traditional knowledge, innovations and practices form important elements of the evidence base for BirdLife’s conservation planning. Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution would pay appropriate respect to these matters over 65,000 years of culture and tradition.

We believe establishing a Voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will enable the Australian government to consider their advice and make informed decisions on many matters affecting their lives – including the protection of Australia’s unique environment, heritage, and precious birds.

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