



3rd June 2023

## **Our inaugural FNCCI Summit '23 – National Reconciliation Week.**

Today, Mabo Day, we pause to reflect on the journey walked and the paths yet to be trodden. As we mark the end of another National Reconciliation Week, we also cast our minds back to a gathering that took place a year ago. In Gladstone, Central Queensland, First Nations business leaders, Traditional Owners, and key stakeholders came together under the common goal of forming a First Nations Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

This day also brings the curtain down on the inaugural First Nations Chamber of Commerce and Industry Summit – **the FNCCI Summit '23**. A gathering of minds and hearts, it saw the participation of over 180 delegates from First Nations businesses, native title PBCs, major industry players, and government officials.

In the hall of the Gladstone Entertainment Conference Centre, we deliberated on First Nations participation in economic development and our role in decarbonisation - topics that carry an urgency that we can no longer afford to ignore.

Mr. Justin Mohamed, our inaugural Ambassador for First Nations Peoples, lent his voice as the keynote speaker, a voice that echoed the spirit of our conversations.

The collective sentiment arising from the two-day Summit is clear and unwavering: it's time to shift our perspective. Government and the private sector must broaden their gaze beyond seeing First Nations engagement and participation in economic development through the narrow lens of Native Title and Cultural Heritage laws. We envision an approach of early engagement that sees First Nations as equal partners with a stake in the prosperity of projects. Early engagement with First Nations and a commitment to equity can unlock projects, secure social licence to operate, meet ESG standards, fulfil human rights obligations, and adhere to OECD guidelines.

Leaders from major industry groups, including Shell-QGC, Fortescue Metals Group, Rio Tinto, ConocoPhillips, and Stanwell were in attendance with Stanwell and FFI voicing their commitment to decarbonise or transition to renewable energy sources. Their words resonated with the urgency of the climate crisis and the imperative to adopt sustainable business practices.

Gavan McFadzean, from the Australian Conservation Foundation, was a key voice in these discussions. McFadzean brought with him years of experience in environmental advocacy and a deep understanding of the intersection between Indigenous rights and environmental conservation. His insightful contributions, which underscored the necessity for collaboration between First Nations communities and industries in the fight against climate change, were a crucial part of our collective dialogue.

These discussions were further enriched by representatives from leading engineering, procurement, and construction companies such as HATCH, UGL Limited, and Bechtel Mining and Metals. Additionally, the Summit benefitted from the presence of renewable energy project owners like The H2U, Acciona Energia, FFI, Energy Estate, CQP, RES, and Sunshine Hydro. Their collective commitment towards a sustainable future was a clear indicator of the significant strides being made in this direction.

In the spirit of partnership, The Hydrogen Utility (H2U) signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the First Nations Bailai Gurang Gooreng Gooreng Taribelang Bunda People RNTBC. In another positive step, Stanwell showed commitment to the early Front End Engineering Design stage of the CQH2 Project in Gladstone through a letter of intent and funding.

The week was a testament to the strengthening bonds between First Nations people and business, industry and government. Delegates travelled from Western Australia, Northern Territory, Cape York, South West Queensland, the Gladstone Region and even The Netherlands to share in this momentous occasion.

The Summit underscored that our transition to renewables is not just a shift in energy source but an opportunity to bridge the gap - to bring us closer to the dream of a reconciled Australia.

In the face of past failures and missed opportunities, the Summit showcased the promise of a brighter tomorrow. A tomorrow where the private sector and government owned corporations lead the way in transforming how we partner with First Nations in economic legacy building, economic development, and decarbonisation.

Thank you to all those who attended and made such a valuable contribution. We look forward to welcoming you to our second **FNCCI Summit** to be held in the near future!



Matthew Cooke  
**Chairman – FNCCI**



Josh Hollingsworth  
**Executive Lead – FNCCI**