



FIRST NATIONS CLEAN ENERGY SYMPOSIUM

21 - 22 July, 2022

Grand Hyatt Hotel, Naarm (Melbourne)



OVERVIEW

A two-day symposium held in Naarm, hosted by the National Native Title Council, First Nations Clean Energy Network and the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, the First Nations Clean Energy Symposium brought together Traditional Owners, communities engaging in the renewable energy industry, government policy makers and First Nations leaders to hear and learn from each other.



Grand Hyatt Hotel

In summary, the symposium covered:

- Supporting community-owned renewable projects deliver lower-cost, reliable energy
- Powering job opportunities and strong economies so our mob can live and work on Country
- Medium to large scale - the benefits, challenges and opportunities
- Policy - developing a national framework to ensure First Nations participation and benefit from Renewable Energy
- Industry best practice - doing it differently
- Workshops on Hydrogen & Carbon
- Sharing lessons from international expertise - Indigenous Clean Energy Canada and US counterparts
- Strengthen our Network and our ability to advocate together, share lessons and engage with industry

The symposium also consulted on Industry Best Practice principles to ensure communities have the tools they need to make decisions, negotiate and ensure benefits.

The program comprised a series of presentations, including renowned keynote speakers, workshops and a number of unique networking opportunities such as the Symposium Dinner on Thursday 21 July and Breakfast on Friday 22 July.



First Nations Clean Energy Symposium Speakers, Steering Committee and Delegates

SPONSOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The First Nations Clean Energy Symposium would not have been possible without assistance from: University of Melbourne, Indigenous Land and Sea Council and BHP.



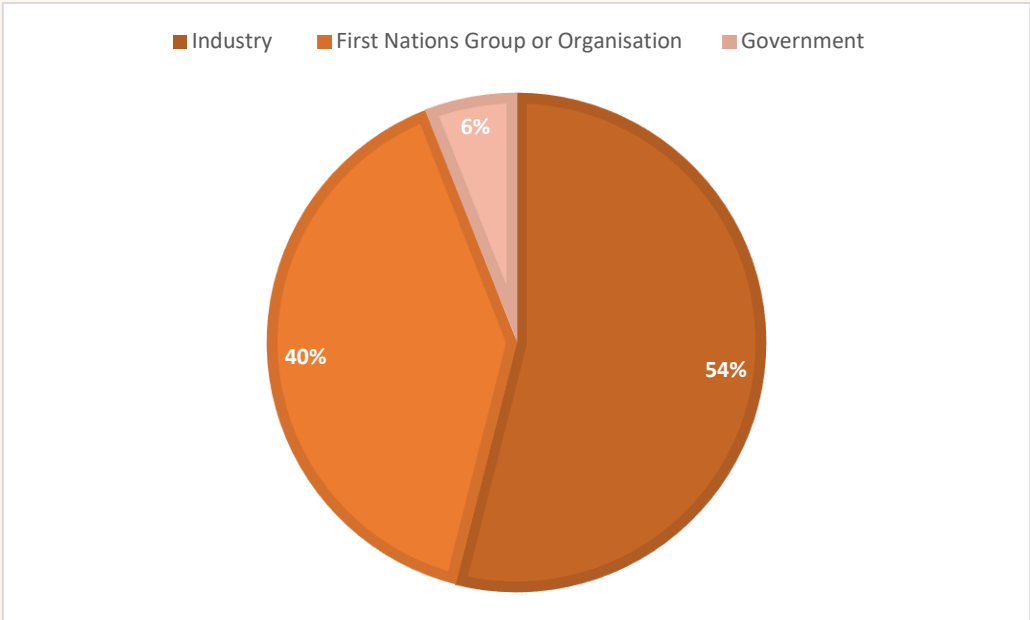
Karrina Nolan, Original Power



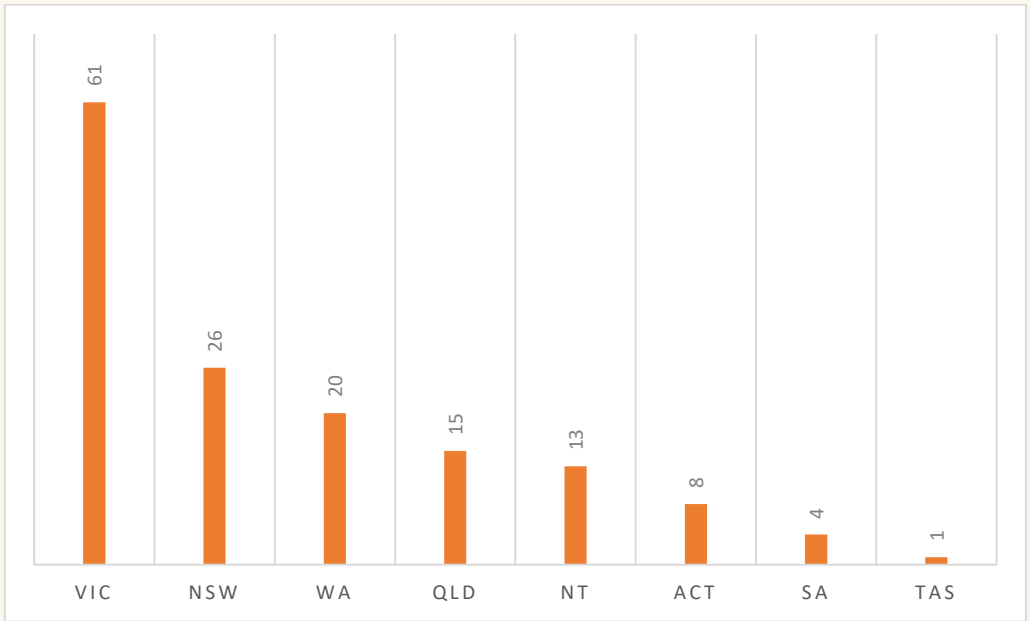
Jamie Lowe, NNTC

REGISTRATION SUMMARY

ORGANISATION



STATE





Kado Muir, NNTC

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: THURSDAY JULY 21

WHEN	WHAT	WHO'S LEADING
8am - 8.50am	First Nations - Caucus	Symposium Steering Group
9am - 10am	Opening Plenary Welcome to Country – Wurundjeri Council with Elder Robert Taylor MC – Cissy Gore Birch Introductions & Setting the Scene	Jamie Lowe National Native Title Council Karrina Nolan First Nations Clean Energy Network & Original Power Chris Croker First Nations Clean Energy Network/Impact IP
10am - 10.30am	PANEL #1 First Nations clean energy achievements globally Facilitator – Karrina Nolan Our First Nations Friends in Canada and the US are well advanced in using clean energy to transform communities, creating jobs, business opportunities and a clean future. Hear case studies of community	Brett Isaac Navajo Power Freddie Campbell Indigenous Clean Energy Canada

	power and how we can apply lessons here.	
11am - 11.40am	<p>PANEL #2 Opportunities and challenges of clean energy for our mob Facilitator – Paul Paton</p> <p>Across the country, First Nations communities are right now designing and building renewables, from small scale solar to microgrids, while others are negotiating with large scale proponents. Hear from them about what's working, what's not and what they've learnt along the way.</p>	<p>Ellie Kamara CEO, Atyenhenge Atherre Aboriginal Corporation</p> <p>Jason King Traditional Owner, Atyenhenge Atherre Aboriginal Corporation</p> <p>Les Schultz Mirning/Ngadu</p> <p>Gadrian Hoosan Borroloola</p> <p>Lauren Mellor Original Power</p>
11.40am - 12.30pm	<p>PANEL #3 National landscape & politics of clean energy Facilitator – Cissy Gore Birch</p> <p>The path to the renewables revolution in Australia has not been smooth! Big picture thinking economists, campaigners and unionists who've paved the way reflect on what's got us here and what we need to transform our nation, discussing everything from climate change policy to people power, infrastructure needs to net zero targets and beyond.</p>	<p>Ross Garnaut Economist, Author of Superpower</p> <p>Amanda McKenzie Climate Council</p> <p>Claire O'Rourke The Sunrise Project</p> <p>Trevor Gauld Electrical Trades Union</p>
1.30pm - 2.30pm	<p>PANEL #4 An economic transition to clean energy Facilitator – Cissy Gore Birch</p> <p>The nuts and bolts of how we transition to a clean energy economy are many and varied. We explore what the transition looks like, from the global economy to impacts on local communities. How do we assert native title rights and build resilience in regional and remote communities? What infrastructure do we need? Who finances the shift and how will the market adjust?</p>	<p>Saul Griffith Founder, Rewiring Australia</p> <p>Tim Buckley Climate Energy Finance</p> <p>Amanda Cahill Next Economy</p> <p>Chris Faris ARENA</p> <p>Emily Gerrard Comhar Group</p>

2.40pm - 3.30pm	WORKSHOP #1 Community Energy Models Facilitator – Tom Widdup Getting communities clean energy connected is both challenging and rewarding. Bring along your questions and thinking caps to this interactive workshop which profiles a number of community-driven projects, from a remote solar-powered community centre to homelands replacing diesel with solar hybrid systems to microgrids for larger communities and more.	Lauren Mellor Original Power Chris Croker Impact IP Andrew Bray RE-Alliance
2.15pm - 3.15pm	WORKSHOP #2 FIRST NATION CLOSED SESSION Facilitator - First Nations Clean Energy Network A closed workshop for First Nations mob to hear about, discuss and give input into the Network's draft best practice principles. Tell us how they could be useful? What's important? What's missing? There'll be an opportunity to highlight specific policy concerns and collaborate on ways we can take collective action.	
3.45pm - 5.00pm	WORKSHOP #3 Best Practice for Industry Industry is as keen as we are to do things differently when it comes to clean energy development. We'll pinpoint what's at the heart of 'best practice' as well as what free, prior and informed consent really looks like. Floor discussion on how industry can best support First Nations' engagement in the renewables boom and share in its benefits.	Lily O'Neill University of Melbourne Climate Futures Anirudha Nagar NNTC (FPIC) Tom Widdup NNTC (FPIC) Justin Coburn Beon Energy

DAY TWO: FRIDAY 22 JULY

WHEN	WHAT	WHO'S LEADING
9.00am - 10.30am	<p>PANEL #5 Taking Action – A National Framework and Best Practice Facilitator – Chris Crocker</p> <p>Australia can be a world leader in clean energy, if First Nations, government and industry work hand in hand. The First Nations Clean Energy Network will work with the Federal Government and State and Territory Energy Ministers to develop a framework that guarantees First Nations participation and ensures everyone shares in the benefits of renewables. In this session, we expand on the key best practice principles we are asking the industry to commit to and hear a response from the Assistant Minister for Energy and Climate Change and the industry.</p>	<p>Jenny McAllister Assistant Minister – Energy & Climate Change</p> <p>Kane Thornton Clean Energy Council</p> <p>First Nations speakers on principles and policy</p>
11am - 12pm	<p>PANEL # 6 Hydrogen - What is happening on country, the opportunities and the challenges. Facilitator - Kado Muir</p> <p>Hydrogen – a silver bullet or a whole new can of worms? Hear about what makes the hydrogen sector tick, how it works, the scope of projects proposed nationally, the implications of the scale and footprint of hydrogen development, as well as the opportunities and challenges it presents</p>	<p>Fiona Simon CEO, Australian Hydrogen Council</p> <p>Lance McCallum Assistant Minister for Hydrogen</p> <p>Michael Brear Net Zero Australia</p>
12pm - 1pm	<p>WORKSHOP #4A First Nations Business & Investment Facilitator - Chris Croker Impact IP</p> <p>Darren Godwell i2i Global</p> <p>Kado Muir Tjiwari</p> <p>Ruby Heard Alinga Energy</p>	<p>WORKSHOP #4B Agreement Making & Negotiation</p> <p>Facilitator - Anirudha Nagar</p> <p>Lily O'Neill University of Melbourne Climate Futures</p> <p>Heidi Norman UTS</p>

	<p>First Nations businesses and investors are already active players in Australia's clean energy boom. Get hot tips on how to nurture and build business opportunities and hear about key ingredients you need to foster new and exciting business ventures.</p>	<p>It is out lands and waters that offer rich, renewable resources, especially for solar and wind power. Making strong agreements and asserting our Native Title and Traditional Owner rights is critical as the clean energy industry expands. This workshop will look at essential components of good agreements and what needs to be strengthened.</p>
<p>2pm - 2.45pm</p>	<p>WORKSHOP #5 Native Title Rights and Challenges Facilitator - Belinda Burbidge</p> <p>What are the implications for Traditional Owners of proposed changes to the Western Australian Land Administration Act? The workshop will also cover the property rights of Traditional Owners in relation to large scale projects.</p>	<p>Emeritus Professor Jon Altman Original Power Board</p> <p>Greg McIntyre Senior Council</p>
<p>2.45pm - 3.45pm</p>	<p>WORKSHOP #6 - First Nations Closed Session</p> <p>This closed workshop will invite input on draft Traditional Owner negotiation guidelines. Join us as we also create space to debrief new ideas and issues that came up during the Symposium and consolidate the next steps on how we can continue to work together and through the First Nations Clean Energy Network.</p>	<p>First Nations Clean Energy Network</p>



FIRST NATIONS CLEANERY ENERGY SYMPOSIUM DINNER



Held in the Mayfair Ballroom delegates were treated to a night of First Class First Nations Entertainment from Kee'ahn, Amos Roach, The Merindas and Soju Gang (DJ)



Rather than hand out individual gifts to the delegates, we opted to hold a raffle, offering a prize of a hand carved shield by Artist Mick Harding who belongs to the Yowong-Illam-Baluk clan (Mansfield Region) of the Taungurung people, purchased from the Koori Heritage Trust.





KEY LEARNINGS

JUST TRANSITION

- The transition to clean energy must be just and equitable and put First Nations communities at the forefront, particularly with a large portion of Australia's land mass held through native title and Aboriginal land rights legislation.
- In accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), First Nations have a right to determine their own priorities as to their lands, territories and resources.
- Proponents must respect the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), which includes the right to withhold consent (the right to veto).

ENGAGEMENT

- Early engagement is vital and beneficial for all parties to build trust and strong relationships.
- Companies should recruit people from communities to initiate the conversation in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner.
- Communities and proponents should co-design engagement and negotiation processes.
- Industry players must learn how to listen, engage and share benefits, as well as the cultural context and regulatory processes, such as those involved with native title.

NEGOTIATING AGREEMENTS and BENEFIT SHARING

- Agreements that provide sustainable and long-term benefits are critical. International examples from NZ/Canada/US can help as they are further along on the journey of benefit sharing.

- Traditional Owners (TOs) need to do their research and due diligence about who the companies/entities approaching them to develop on their Country are.
- First Nations communities should demand to be equity partners in projects, to share annual profits, work/jobs/training, and to ensure remote communities have access to affordable and reliable energy.
- Land stewardship should be embedded to reduce local environmental impacts.
- Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs) and TOs need to be resourced to mitigate power imbalances and level the negotiation playing field including through access to independent legal and technical advice so communities can make informed decisions.
- As much as possible, agreements should be made public.
- Communities should build strategic partnerships, including with other communities to share knowledge and learn from case studies.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

First Nations leaders from the US and Canada shared learnings from their jurisdictions to support communities to lead clean energy development, including through:

- At least 51% equity in projects
- Training and skill-building programs for communities in the construction, operation, maintenance, financing and governance of projects; and
- Moving away from over-reliance on governments for funding, including blended finance options (government funding together with private sources).

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Communities need information and tools to better understand clean energy developments - pictorial communications tools can help to explain information.
- With less than 1% of the industry workforce being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, there is a need for an industry wide approach to training and development.

IMPACTS OF CLEAN ENERGY and ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

- End of life of materials (e.g. solar panels, batteries) have potential to harm Country so circular economy principles need to be in place.
- Communities should compel companies to pay for detailed cultural heritage mapping.
- All the potential impacts need to be considered, including construction impacts and the impact of ancillary infrastructure such as transmission lines.
- The planned update to the transmission line network in Australia requires robust benefit sharing frameworks that provide outcomes for host communities.

COMMUNITY ENERGY MODELS

- Community energy models can facilitate infrastructure modernisation, local jobs, and cost savings as residential rooftop solar is now the cheapest energy in the world.
- The Santa Teresa microgrid example combines 'behind the meter' and islanding functionality.

- The loss of essential electricity supply has wide-ranging impacts on community residents including the inability to safely store medicines and food or keep households at safe temperatures.
- Tennant Creek is a solar hotspot, and installing rooftop solar to bring household power costs down should be a straight-forward success story.
- Community-ownership models like that being advanced at Marlinja Outstation are the best way to ensure that the benefits of cheaper, cleaner energy are delivered directly back to local families and businesses.
- Community-owned solar power offers a way to meet the needs of local families and businesses, keeping power and any profit in local hands so TOs can reinvest that into their future and start making positive changes.

FINANCE

- Access to capital – communities are facing significant up-front costs and need support to undertake feasibility studies.
- Advocacy targeted towards responsible investors may provide leverage to improve Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance outcomes.
- Corporations' risk disclosures should be extended to include nature/biodiversity and cultural heritage risks

POLICIES

- Governments have a critical role to play to better incentivise First Nations participation in the clean energy sector.



MEDIA COVERAGE

21 JULY 2022

[NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES](#) Karrina Nolan and Kado Muir quoted

[AAP NEWSWIRE – DENILQUIN PASTORAL TIMES](#) Kado Muir and Federal Climate Change & Energy Assistant Minister, Jenny McAllister quoted

[ABC RADIO WITH VIRGINIA TRIOLI](#) with Kado Muir

[YAHOO NEWS! – AAP](#)

22 JULY 2022

[ABC RADIO NATIONAL BREAKFAST](#) with Karrina Nolan, Les Schultz and Freddie Campbell

ABC RADIO NEWS – MELBOURNE Kado Muir interview by Glen Bartholomew.

[NITV ONLINE – AAP](#) with Karrina Nolan and Kado Muir

25 JULY 2022

[FINANCIAL REVIEW](#) with Ruby Heard and Chris Croker. Kado Muir quoted

[ENERGY MAGAZINE](#) with Kado Muir and Federal Climate Change & Energy Assistant Minister, Jenny McAllister quoted

28 JULY 2022

TORRES NEWS Online Newspaper – Edition 42; general symposium overview

2 AUGUST 2022

[TRIPLE A RADIO](#) with Chris Croker

CAAMA RADIO with Les Schultz

3 AUGUST 2022

[ARENA.ORG.AU](#) with Original Power, NNTC & First Nations Clean Energy Symposium

[RESPONSIBLE INVESTOR MAGAZINE](#) with Chris Croker

9 AUGUST 2022

[THE WEST AUSTRALIAN](#) opinion piece written by Emma Garlett with the assistance of the First Nations Clean Energy Network

Bertrand Tungadame from NITV Radio was invited to attend the 1st day of the Symposium to record a series of interviews.



INTERVIEWS WITH BERTRAND TUNGADAME

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/chris-croker-on-first-nations-role-and-participation-as-equals-in-the-clean-energy-transition>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/jamie-lowie-on-why-first-nations-people-must-take-the-lead-in-the-clean-energy-transition>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/nitv-radio-news-22-07-2022>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/nitv-radio/en>

Additional interview with Les Schultz to come.

PODCASTS WITH PODCAST NOW with former journalist Suze Jones



WHERE TO FROM HERE?

We will continue to take steps to develop the tools, resources and critical connections we need to drive the ongoing growth and success of the Network.

Our network leaders have held numerous meetings with government, industry and experts to build our relationships and will continue to engage the Government. We've also been speaking out in the media and at high profile conferences including the influential Sydney Energy Forum, co-hosted by the Australian Government and the International Energy Agency, and the Smart Energy Conference in Sydney. In doing so we're keeping our mission and values at the forefront of the public conversation as Australia rapidly transitions to clean energy.

NEXT STEPS INCLUDE:

- Continue to engage Government - see our [most recent media release](#) on developments following the Symposium with Federal, State and Territory Energy Ministers committing on 12 August 2022 to a co-designed and resources First Nations Clean Energy Strategy.
- Undertake membership recruitment and plan to host state specific clean energy events.
- Regularly convene meetings and continue the conversation with working groups centered on our 3 pillars of work - community, policy and industry.
- Finalise a suite of resources which we're currently consulting on to make sure our communities have all of the information they need to make decisions, negotiate and share in the benefits of the renewables boom:
 - How To Implement Clean Energy - A Guide for Communities: sets out the steps communities need to consider when powering up with renewables.
 - Traditional Owner Negotiation - Projects on Country: a tool for communities wanting to engage well with clean energy projects being developed on your country.
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Best Practice Principles for Clean Energy Projects: advice for good agreement making around proposed clean energy projects on or near your land
 - Clean Energy 101 - Animation: an engaging video explaining the different types of clean energy.

You can catch Network updates by following us on Twitter [@FirstNationsCEN](#)





Chris Croker, Impact IP

TESTIMONIALS

"I've worked in and around native title and Aboriginal land rights in different ways since about 2008 and I've never felt such a sense of hope and potential - and urgency - as there is right now.

Creating a First Nations led space where the stories, ideas and concerns of traditional owners can be heard by the clean energy industry and government decision-makers, and where we can have conversations about how to ensure Traditional Owners have a significant role in the transition to a clean energy future, is so incredibly important and wouldn't happen without Original Power and the NNTC and the Network."

Elizabeth McDonald – Consultant, Chalk & Behrendt

"The First Nations Clean Energy Symposium was an incredibly inspiring and empowering event and gave our climate and energy team at DJAARA the courage, ideas and support to step confidently forward on our clean energy journey. We left the Symposium feeling excited and ready for our Corporation's next steps in healing people, healing Country and healing our climate through renewable energy uptake."

Oli Moraes - Climate Change Policy Officer, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (trading as DJARRA)

"In July I attended the First Nations Clean Energy Symposium and feel blessed to be a registered member in this network, and look forward to being a contributor and collectively learning the way ahead with all mobs.

Personally I am on an amazing journey working in recruitment for the renewable sector on my country. Prior to Covid 19, I worked as a labourer/logistics operations manager and labourer/hirer for three solar farm constructions in Queensland. I have now established my own labour hire services business in an MOU agreement, working progressively towards a sustainable company.

At the symposium I was fortunate to make great connections across the states, and bounced off ideas and plans that will benefit our people and our communities in a unified way.

I look forward to attending future events to help promote my new business and will keep FNCE posted about upcoming projects and further progress."

Donna-Lea Krause – Unified Labour Hire Recruitment, Kabi Kabi Descendant of Towcha Queensland

"The First Nations Clean Energy Symposium was a fabulous opportunity to hear directly from Traditional Owners and First Nations leaders about what's working and what's not in the clean energy transition. Together with representatives from industry, peak bodies, and government, the symposium provided an opportunity for a very special conversation on how we can work together to make self-determination a reality. I hope that this is the first of many such conversations"

Lyn Bowring – Executive Director, Energy Projects and Programs | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning



