

WALKING TOGETHER WITH THE BIRRARUNG



*The Birrarung is alive, has a heart,
a spirit and is part of our Dreaming.
We have lived with and known the
Birrarung since the beginning.
We will always know the Birrarung.*

*Since our beginning it has been known
that we have an obligation to keep the
Birrarung alive and healthy—
for all generations to come.*

*We need to share, we need to listen
and we need to find a way of coming
together to do this.*

*The strength of the Council is
that it brings Indigenous and
non-Indigenous people together.*

The Birrarung Council recognises the unique relationship between the Birrarung and its people. The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung are the people of the river, and the Bunurong are the people of the mouth of the Birrarung. Their songs have been carried by the water from the mountains to the sea for tens of thousands of years.

The Birrarung Council is the voice of the Birrarung, the Yarra River. We advocate on behalf of the Birrarung, which means that **we speak for the river** in policy and planning contexts so that the river can be heard by all.

But we also have a more profound obligation. As the river's voice, our role is to enable and support others to **communicate with the river**, as a single, living, and integrated entity.

Doing so requires us **to be in good relations** with the river, and with each other.

We commit to working together **to protect and care for the Birrarung**. We are a small part of the long story of the Birrarung, but our stewardship and our actions will shape the future of the river.

We recognise that **water is a source of infinite healing**, and that in caring for the Birrarung, the river also cares for us in return.

The experience and expertise of each member of the Birrarung Council is different, and valued. Like the tributaries of the Birrarung, we join our varied experience and expertise together to form a single, integrated voice for the river.

We commit to ensuring that the Birrarung Council reflects the cultural diversity of the community of the Birrarung, and to creating a culturally safe place for us all to work together.

The Birrarung Council recognises Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong as sovereign peoples who have never ceded their rights to lands and waters. We will work together to strengthen their voices as custodians of the Birrarung.

We recognise that we have reciprocal and mutual obligations to each other, and to the Birrarung.

As Council members, we recognise that we are at the beginning of a journey, but we commit to walking that path together.



This statement reflects the position of the Birrarung Council in July 2022.
The statement will be renewed following the appointment of new Council members.