



NORTHERN  
LAND COUNCIL

**MEDIA RELEASE**

*Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life*

## NLC welcomes High Court judgment of native title compensation at Timber Creek

13 March 2019

The NLC interim CEO, Jak Ah Kit, today welcomed the High Court's judgment which awarded compensation of \$2,530,350 to the Ngaliwurru and Nangali peoples – including \$1.3 million for cultural loss – for the extinguishment of native title by NT Government grants of land since 1975.

“This is a landmark decision which sets the rules and means that future claims can be negotiated without the expense and delay of litigation”, Mr Ah Kit said.

“While the High Court reduced the Full Federal Court's award of \$2,899,446 – which itself reduced the original award by the trial Judge of \$3,300,661 – it must be remembered that this is new law and each of these amounts were in the range of what is reasonable.”

“What is important is that the component of \$1.3 million for cultural loss was upheld by all High Court and Federal Court Judges”, Mr Ah Kit said.

“This important finding means that the spiritual connection of Aboriginal people to their country is paramount in Australian law – as it should be. Today's decision is the end of ground breaking native title litigation by the Ngarliwurru and Nungali peoples – the native title holders of the town of Timber Creek in the Victoria River District.”

“In some cases, especially where sacred sites have been damaged in the past, the amount of compensation could be quite substantial,” Mr Ah Kit said.

“But the first step will always be to try and agree to compensation without litigation, and the High Court's judgment shows the way forward for collaborative outcomes.”

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