



**Ben Franklin**

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

Friday, 3 June 2022

### **MABO DAY 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Today we mark 30 years since the High Court of Australia handed down its landmark decision to overturn the principle of *terra nullius* and recognise Native Title rights at Common Law.

At the forefront of this historic decision was Eddie Mabo, who played a pivotal role in the decision that recognised the Meriam people as the Traditional Owners of Mer (Murray Island).

Eddie Mabo's efforts, along with other plaintiffs in the case including Reverend David Passi, Sam Passi, James Rice and Celuia Mapo Sale, led to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples having their native title recognised under Australian law.

Today, during National Reconciliation Week, we proudly celebrate this historic ruling by honouring Eddie Mabo and his fight to recognise the legitimacy of Aboriginal Land Rights.

I would also like to acknowledge former High Court Chief Justice Sir Gerard Brennan, who recently passed away at age 94.

Sir Gerard's pivotal role in writing the lead judgment on the Mabo decision, led to the recognition of rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to the ownership of their lands.

This ruling changed our nation's values and paved the way for reconciliation across the country. We now stand in a better place to move forward together.

30 years on from this significant decision, we now have a greater understanding of what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples want to achieve.

I implore all Australians to join the ongoing reconciliation journey as we celebrate and build on the respectful relationships shared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**MEDIA: Matthew Bridges | 0428 231 771**