

# STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Kempsey Shire Council acknowledges that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (in this area, the Dunghutti Nation) are the first people of this land and have survived European settlement for more than two centuries. The arrival of the Europeans brought massive change to the land and to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

For its part, Kempsey Shire Council acknowledges and grieves for the loss by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of their land, their children, their health, their lives, their culture and their language.

Kempsey Shire Council's commitment is that we will recognise the rights of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live according to their own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and customs, subject to law.

We accept responsibility to develop an awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and society in our community, and to protect and preserve the environment and sites of spiritual and cultural significance.

The Council recognises the valuable contribution to the Macleay Valley made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and looks forward to a future of mutual respect and harmony. In doing so, we acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture continues to strengthen and enrich our community.

We are committed to walk together on this land, we commit ourselves to reconcile and build a better relationship so that we can constitute a united region, respect the land, valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, providing justice and equity for all.

Kempsey Shire Council will look towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures' practical knowledge which could help to secure a sustainable future for our community.

Kempsey Shire Council, in negotiation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, may further reconcile between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other community members by working together for a treaty and /or other agreements of reconciliation.

Kempsey Shire Council, in negotiation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, will develop an action plan to redress disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this community.



**PETER MAINEY**  
Mayor  
Kempsey Shire Council

26th May 1999

**HAROLD SMITH**  
Dunghutti Nation  
Elder Chairperson