



ServiceNow  
www.servicenow.com

680 George St  
Sydney, NSW2000

Tel [\(02\) 9321 2200](tel:(02)93212200)  
Mob [REDACTED]

**Committee Secretary**  
Joint Standing Committee on  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Affairs,  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Friday, May24, 2024

## **Submission on economic self-determination and opportunities for First Nations Australians**

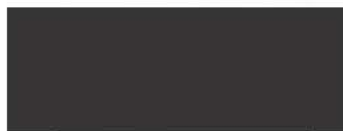
To the Committee Secretary,

ServiceNow is a Global Enterprise software company operating internationally, and with over 900 employees in Australia. We want to use our technology and expertise to make the world better for people. In Australia, our RAP Working Group is focused on delivering on this purpose by identifying and supporting opportunities for employment and self-determination of First Nations Australians. We have partnered with an Indigenous Tech company called Land on Heart to provide guidance and connections to community and have bold ambitions to use technology as a way of supporting this mission.

This submission comes at a time when we believe there is a unique opportunity to increase the engagement and subsequent benefits to First Nations Communities by improving their ability to participate in the nature-positive market which is emerging. This submission is therefore based on how we see that being enabled.

If you have any further questions on our response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,



**John Asquith**  
Director, Government Relations

## Overview

The nature-positive market will provide a new source of funds to restore and conserve Australia's biodiversity. Evidence from the establishment of a biodiversity market in NSW suggests that there is potentially more demand than supply of biodiversity certificates, suggesting an opportunity for more projects to be proposed and supported by this market.

First Nations Australians, with a 60,000 year track record of caring for the natural environment, are the most qualified group of people to meet the requirements for an increase in supply, through coordination from traditional owners and Indigenous Ranger Groups. However, evidence suggests that there are some barriers in place which will limit the capacity, capability and willingness of these groups to participate effectively in this market. We believe these barriers can be removed with the help of technology to allow First Nations people and organisations to focus on their environmental work rather than the burden of administration that has traditionally come with that.

Therefore, we propose establishing a transparent, visible and outcome-based platform to enable, manage, track and fund biodiversity conservation efforts. It will be co-developed with Indigenous expertise at its core, leveraging existing resources and enabling capacity to be built to address the future demands of this nature-positive opportunity.



## About ServiceNow

**THE  
WORLD  
WORKS  
WITH  
SERVICENOW™**



ServiceNow  
www.servicenow.com

680 George St  
Sydney, NSW2000

Tel [\(02\) 9321 2200](tel:(02)93212200)  
Mob [REDACTED]

ServiceNow (NYSE: NOW) makes the world work better for everyone. Our cloud-based platform and solutions help digitise and unify organisations so that they can find smarter, faster, better ways to make work flow. So employees and customers can be more connected, more innovative, and more agile. And we can all create the future we imagine.

“The world works with ServiceNow™ “

Our purpose is to make the world work better for everyone. This includes creating an impact beyond our four walls to enable everyone to contribute to a more equitable, sustainable, and ethical world. Wherever we operate, our purpose guides our actions. We aim to create a positive economic, social, and environmental impact because we recognise our responsibility to drive change not just in our own company, but with our customers, partners, and society more broadly.

We began operations in Australia in 2013. In just over ten years, we have built a customer base that includes local, state and federal governments, and some of Australia's biggest brands, representing more than 70% of the ASX 200. We recognise the importance of the reconciliation movement and the need for businesses in this country – whether Australian-owned or multinational – to take action to drive change. We therefore welcome the opportunity to contribute towards the government's thinking around economic self-determination and opportunities for First Nations Australians.

For more information, visit: [www.servicenow.com](http://www.servicenow.com)

## Response to Terms of Reference

### Opportunities for, and barriers to training, employment and business development

Employment opportunities are based around work that needs to be done by people with the skills to do that work, and someone who is prepared to pay.

The Nature Repair market appears to tick all those boxes by providing employment opportunities in Indigenous communities. Specifically, the Indigenous Ranger groups have the skills and resources, with the potential to pass on those skills to others in the community if there was sufficient work, to develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce that is located in areas where the work needs to be done and rewarded for work that is aligned to their purpose and values.



ServiceNow  
www.servicenow.com

680 George St  
Sydney, NSW2000

Tel (02) 9321 2200

One of the key demands that the market will have, in order to justify investments, is evidence that the projects are real and that outcomes are being achieved. This has historically resulted in a significant burden of administration that is placed on the Ranger Groups and others involved. We believe that by providing technology that makes data collection easier, and capabilities that can turn that data into report formats that meet the demands of those investing, we can both increase the capacity and effectiveness on the supply-side, and build confidence and the trust needed to expand the demand-side of the marketplace. For example :

- Converting proposed projects and initiatives into biodiversity certificates that are tracked using low-power consumption distributed ledger technology, such as that advocated by Hedera.com.
- Mobile devices and applications that can be used in remote areas, disconnected from the internet, that can be used to record activities by taking time-stamped and geolocated photos and video or audio recordings, adding voice notes, using checkboxes to indicate completion of tasks and potentially automatically tracking hours and areas worked.
- Using GenAI to re-assemble the data collected by ranger groups and summarise it into formats that are required for reporting.

As the benefits and ease of using technology become clearer, there is likely to be an interest in how the technology works, and a desire to continually improve and adapt the technology to new requirements. We believe this could create a secondary benefit for First Nations people creating opportunities to learn new skills in developing and supporting the technology and applications they are using for their work. The skills could then be applied to develop new or expand existing businesses offering services in the tech market, where skills are in demand, and salaries are high.

### Impediments to building the economic and social infrastructure required to support economic prosperity in the long term, including barriers to building the economic and social infrastructure required to support industry and business to expand and create jobs

The success of the above approach is dependent on a thriving and successful nature repair market. We have already seen from the NSW attempts at establishing a market that cutting corners by running it on spreadsheets and emails will not work and is not scalable. There has to be investment in a platform that is capable of hosting a marketplace that connects supply and demand and enables information to be exchanged effectively and transparently. Without that, the supply side will not engage and demand will dry up, eliminating the source of funding that will create and sustain employment opportunities.



ServiceNow  
www.servicenow.com

680 George St  
Sydney, NSW2000

Tel [\(02\) 9321 2200](tel:(02)93212200)  
Mob [REDACTED]

## Options to unlock capital and leverage intellectual property, the Indigenous Estate and First Nations skills to elevate First Nations people as economic partners

Very few would argue that they know more about managing and conserving our natural habitats in Australia better than First Nations people. This is the intellectual capital that has been significantly undervalued in the past, and it is only in recent years that the potential value is being realised.

The biodiversity market will attach values to biodiversity certificates, and the authenticity and trust in the promised outcomes from the purchase of these biodiversity certificates will have a major impact on their value and the willingness of organisations to invest their capital in this market. It has become clear eg from the carbon credit and trading market that there is typically a premium associated with projects that are supported by Indigenous groups, as they have a track record of effectiveness in delivering outcomes.

This is another reason why there needs to be safeguards put in place to ensure that organisations claiming to be owned and operated by First Nations Australians are genuine and can be trusted. This will again boil down to having a platform that has trusted data and will give government the ability to track and investigate cases that could be fraudulent etc in order to maintain the required high levels of integrity and trust in the marketplace.

## **Recommendations**

In order to take advantage of this opportunity for creating and increasing employment in Indigenous communities through Nature Positive programs we would suggest the following actions are taken :

1. Provide grant funding for Ranger groups to co-develop, test and deploy new technology that will support their ability to scale and reduce the admin burden for reporting their activities.
2. Create a biodiversity project marketplace hosted on a digital platform where First Nations organisations can propose biodiversity projects and have them converted to biodiversity certificates for sale to organisations wishing to invest in those projects (Note – there is already discussion relating to 'registers' etc, hosted by the Clean Energy Regulator, but that is not the same as a digital marketplace).