



BUSH HERITAGE AUSTRALIA

Leading Aboriginal figure joins Bush Heritage Board

Bush Heritage Australia warmly welcomes Melissa George, the CEO of the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAISMA), to its Board.

A Wulgurukaba woman with traditional connections to Magnetic Island and the Townsville region in Far North Queensland, Melissa is passionate about Indigenous stewardship of land and sea.

She has advised the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments on issues ranging from threatened species management to carbon farming.

“We are very fortunate to have such a talented and experienced Aboriginal leader such as Melissa George join our Board,” said Bush Heritage Chief Executive, Gerard O’Neill.

“Bush Heritage is a trusted partner to Aboriginal people and communities, and Melissa’s appointment strengthens our depth of knowledge and understanding, so we can further support these partnerships and our conservation work.”

On her appointment, Melissa said: “I look forward to working with the Board and staff of Bush Heritage Australia to ensure that Traditional Owners are active partners and at the forefront of business that is undertaken by Bush Heritage on Country.

“As we move towards a post Native Title era we need to ensure that we are innovative and prepared to push the boundaries to recognise the rights and interests of Traditional Owners and their communities.”

Melissa serves on the Board of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and has been part of Bush Heritage’s Aboriginal Engagement Committee since November 2017.

She also serves on the Board of the Cooperative Research Centre for Northern Australia.

A saltwater woman, Melissa’s background in Cultural Heritage and Protected Area Management will be integral in shaping the future of Bush Heritage’s Aboriginal Partnerships Program, which began in 2005.

The program encompasses 24 active partnerships around Australia, representing almost five million hectares of jointly protected land.

Melissa will serve on the Board alongside the seven existing Bush Heritage board members: Chris Grubb (President), Nicholas Burton Taylor AM (Vice President and treasurer); Prof Sarah Bekessy; Phillip Cornwell; Dr Alexander Gosling AM; Prof Michelle Leishman and Dr Rebecca Nelson.

ABOUT BUSH HERITAGE:

We are one of Australia’s largest and most effective conservation organisations. We respect, listen and learn from working side-by-side with Traditional Owners.

We use best-practice science and collaborate with others – including Aboriginal people, pastoralists and partner organisations – to achieve our goals.

A conservation community of more than 30,000 people supports our work. Together, we are returning the bush to good health.

