

## **Subject: Submission on Remote Food Security from the First Nations Bushfoods and Botanicals Alliance Australia**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the consultation for remote food security. As the First Nations Bushfoods and Botanicals Alliance Australia, we emphasise the importance of education programs that support food security, health, in addition to support for economic development and participation, within the native foods industry.

For over 40,000 years, our ancient foods sustained our ancestors, fostering healthy and active societies. Today, we must reconnect with these traditional foods, to improve the current reliance on community stores, but also looking to the development of Community Gardens which include our bush foods.

Here are our responses and recommendations:

### **What Does Food Security Mean to You?**

Food security means consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets the dietary needs and preferences of our communities. It also encompasses the preservation and promotion of traditional knowledge and practices related to bush foods.

### **How Could Food Security Be Improved in Your Community?**

Improving food security in our communities involves several key initiatives:

#### **1. Education Programs:**

- Implement education programs to teach traditional and sustainable agricultural practices.
- Offer training about healthy eating, working with local health services and schools, and developing resources in local languages. These resources should also be visual in the community store
- Offer training on the cultivation of fruit and vegetables, as well as the harvesting, and processing of native foods.

#### **2. Economic Development:**

- Support the establishment and operation of community gardens and native plant nurseries across Aboriginal communities in the NT.
- Ensure sustainability through capacity building, allowing communities to grow gardens and develop skills for commercialising products.

#### **3. Cultural Reconnection:**

- Foster reconnection with our ancestor's foods, emphasising the health benefits and cultural significance of our cultural foods.
- Strengthen whole-of-community cultural connections to these practices and understanding, to improve social, cultural and emotional wellbeing of individuals, families and communities

## **Initiatives for Consideration:**

### **1. Community Gardens and Native Plant Nurseries:**

- Establish and maintain community gardens and native plant nurseries with ongoing funding
- Focus on capacity building to ensure long-term sustainability beyond external funding.

### **2. Development of Indigenous Bush Foods and Medicines Hub and manufacturing**

- support for Indigenous students to learn about our local foods and also to study and understand our ancient foods. This could also foster interest in the study of nutrition and health through ground up impact.
- Establish a dedicated hub centre in the NT, led by the First Nations Bushfoods & Botanical Alliance Australia

### **Feedback on Discussion Paper Focus Areas:**

The Focus Areas in the Discussion Paper align well with our priorities. However, we recommend:

- Increasing emphasis on traditional knowledge and practices.
- Expanding support for community-led initiatives and capacity building.

### **Feedback on Intended Outcomes:**

The Intended Outcomes should include:

- Greater inclusion of First Nations perspectives and leadership.
- Sustainable economic development opportunities in the native foods industry.

### **Feedback on Potential Actions:**

Potential Actions should encompass:

- Ongoing funding for education and training programs.
- Support for the development and commercialisation of native foods and medicines.

### **Additional Considerations:**

- Enhance legal protections for Indigenous knowledge and IP.
- Promote partnerships between government, industry, and First Nations communities.

Thank you for considering our feedback. We look forward to collaborating to achieve food security and economic development for our communities.

Kind regards,

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Title]

First Nations Bushfoods and Botanicals Alliance Australia

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