



Eastern Maar  
Aboriginal Corporation

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Djab Wurrung Birthing Tree Desecration Confirmation of Poisoning

23 August 2023

The Eastern Maar Nation is deeply hurt to learn that a culturally significant Djab Wurrung Birthing Tree near Buangor, desecrated on the night of Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> of August, was poisoned after lab testing detected trace elements of Glyphosate. The Eastern Maar condemns this act of violence.

In response to this attack, EMAC will continue to promote best practice approaches to identifying and protecting cultural heritage for the benefit of all Victorians, as part of all projects on Country.

Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC) staff are working with Eastern Maar Citizens, Victoria Police, First Peoples State Relations and Major Roads Projects Victoria (MRPV) to firstly protect the tree, assist in its rehabilitation and full recovery, and detection of the individual(s) responsible for the attack.

EMAC is offering a **\$10,000 Reward** for information that will lead directly to a prosecution and conviction for this act of harm to an Aboriginal Place.<sup>1</sup> This reward is Eastern Maar community money and demonstrates the serious nature of the communities' response to the violence.

We are appealing for anyone with information to contact their local Victoria Police station or by calling Crime Stoppers on **1800 300 000**.

Eastern Maar takes this opportunity to thank members of the broader community who have expressed their concern, shock and condolences to our community. EMAC will continue to work with all parties associated with the Western Highway development and the identification and protection of tangible and intangible cultural values.

Quote attributable to Eastern Maar Citizen and Djab Wurrung person April Clark, on behalf of the Eastern Maar Women's' Collective:

"We cannot express the depths of the pain that our hearts have endured at the desecration of our sacred birthing tree. This cowardly act upon our people and our sacred birthing tree has brought about our resilience, strength and unity in providing the love and healing for our sacred tree.

The outpouring of support from the broader community is a powerful message that there are many that stand with us."

Quote attributable to EMAC Acting Chief Executive Officer William Briggs:

"It is a great shame to think that such a beautiful old tree has been desecrated and poisoned. We treat this tree as one of our own as you would with your own child. Our Djab Wurrung people are the Tree and the Tree are the Djab Wurrung."

[www.easternmaar.com.au](http://www.easternmaar.com.au)

The information provided must lead to a conviction. The total reward is \$10,000 and may be shared between persons. Payment will be made upon the expiration of any appeal period of a conviction. EMAC may only pay the reward if the person co-operates as reasonably required to secure a conviction.