



Date: 16 January 2023

To: AIATSIS CEO

RE: AIATSIS / FORGOTTEN TRIBES OF FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

Further to my letter dated 29 October 2020^{1,2} I am advising you the very real impacts of the HORTON map 26 years on from being published by AIATSIS in 1996.

As a Buluwai Elder, I am involved in the Cairns Regional Claim Native Title here in Far North Queensland and the distortion to Aboriginal history and culture the HORTON map is causing has been, and continues to be, catastrophic. The tribes who are not named on the map (listed below) are being genocided today, now, through the Native Title paperwork process.

The genocide is still being played out over 200 years later to diminish, distort and confuse our own tribal history - a whole generation of Aboriginal people in FNQ have been tricked by the HORTON map and now believe a false version of Aboriginal history.

For our children and grandchildren, I am asking all schools, hospitals and government departments to remove this fake and destructive map from their walls. There are many survivors from families and clans in FNQ whose tribes were removed by HORTON according to his self-identified "creation". The HORTON map affects families and clans from the following local tribes:

- Yirrganydji
- Muluridji
- Gunggay
- Buluwai
- Ngatjan

These disenfranchised tribes suffer HORTONs misinformation and have done for past 26 years. For this reason, I am asking that this map is removed from sale. Horton says "*The regions were created...*" and yet people can buy it from the government website, and look at it, and make a 'belief' based on HORTONs "*regions*". How does that make sense?

Alternatively, add a new disclaimer to the map:

This map is not to be used for the Wet Tropics of Queensland Rainforest Aboriginal People Cultural Heritage, at all.

HORTON says in 1996 he "*created*" this map and specifies "*The groups (not tribes)...*". In the Wet Tropics Bama (Rainforest Aboriginal People) had tribal estates bound to their father's country – just like many other first nation cultures around the world - where men stayed on their father's country and women were married into adjoining tribal estates. The HORTON map is genociding my tribe and my ancestors by "*grouping*" regions - however HORTON decided at the time.

We know we are Buluwai People from Tindale's records and also generational family oral records. In more recent times Dr Timothy Bottoms documented our tribe³. The HORTON map may be true in other places in Australia but it is completely false in FNQ. Buluwai People have their own tribal language, and while similar to neighbouring Djabugay and Yidiny there is no umbrella language "*grouping*" as HORTON has indicated. It was common knowledge that as a Rainforest Aboriginal we were multilingual - speaking up to 6 languages. This disclaimer must be added now otherwise I will seek further legal advice against HORTON/AIATSIS.

I am motivated to call for action because the next generation are confused by this map and the youth are physically taking it out on each other in our local community. Acts of violence are being used to prove their points - like tribes don't exist because they are not on the government map. Physical violence for our youth is an unacceptable price to pay for the fake map.

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Now, I am asking all Bama in the Wet Tropics to honour our ancestors and throw this map away. Put it in the bin as worthless cultural garbage. This map will bring Bama people no love, unity, harmony or peace for our families.

Now we must work together, pool all our might in this generation of Elders, to save our ancestor's lands from certain environmental destruction, and bring it back to Aboriginal custodianship. We are the original custodians of the Wet Tropics who care for the lands and waters, the rare plants and animals, and each other. The government wants us to fight over the scraps, again. Our enemy is not each other – we are all family – our enemy remains unchanged for over 6 generations.

On behalf of all Buluwai People, may I extend our thanks to you. Stay sacred, as we all are.

Yours sincerely



William (Willie) Brim
Buluwai Traditional Owner / Cultural Custodian

¹ <https://buluwai.org/content/uploads/LETTER-Buluwai-Indigenous-Corporation-AIATSIS-29-Oct-2020.pdf>

² <https://buluwai.org/content/uploads/AIATSIS-Forgotten-tribes-of-Far-North-Queensland.pdf>

³ <https://cairnshistory.com.au/dr-timothy-bottoms-response-to-horton-aiatsis-1996>

Web copy: <https://buluwai.org/aiatsis-forgotten-tribes-of-far-north-queensland/>