

**Submission
No 157**

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO RAISE THE
WARRAGAMBA DAM WALL**

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Although ensuring an adequate supply of fresh water to the Sydney population rightly needs to be considered, this must not obscure other rights. The Gundungurra people, like many Aboriginal people along the East Coast of NSW have suffered greatly due to dispossession of their lands, destruction of their language, cultural dislocated and disregard for their areas of cultural and spiritual significance in favour of settler culture. At this time in our history, this must stop. We now know only too well the consequences of these actions on Australia's First Peoples who have lived here for 60,000+ years in a 'civilisation' based on profound eco-consciousness, kept alive in their songlines and ceremonies and their sacred responsibility of 'caring for country'. The Gundungurra people have spoken loudly and clearly. They do not want the dam's walls raised and their areas of cultural significance submerged and removed from them. One of their most significant totems is the eel, and raising the dam's height would have a significant negative impact on the lifecycle of the eels. It is time we all considered not only 'whitefella' needs, but all the creatures of our world that make up our ecosystems in this time of radical species extinction and climate change. This is particularly significant for this area and its relationship to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area - so precious for the future of Australia and the people of Sydney.

We must find another solution to Sydney's water supply, including educating the public to change their water consumption habits to live more sustainably in a world that will face warmer and warmer weather and reduced rainfall.