



Why Australia needs **strong nature laws**

Australia has one of the worst extinction records on Earth. Our current environment laws are failing to protect our iconic animals and the forests, rivers and wetlands we love.

A once-in-a-decade review has recommended a complete overhaul of Australia's national environment laws and an independent regulator to enforce them. This is our chance to restore ecosystems and bring our wildlife back from the brink.

Australians agree and 505,872 people, including 134,942 from New South Wales and 4,779 from your electorate of Grayndler, have signed ACF's petition demanding strong national laws that actually protect nature.

"The EPBC act is outdated and requires fundamental reform ... to shy away from the fundamental reforms recommended by this Review is to accept the continued decline of our iconic places and the extinction of our most threatened plants, animals and ecosystems. This is unacceptable."

Professor Graeme Samuel AC, Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act Review.

We know what needs to be done to protect Australia and New South Wales' unique plants, animals and ecosystems for future generations. Will you speak to the Minister for Environment and Water Tanya Plibersek about the urgent need for strong nature laws and an independent and well-resourced regulator to enforce them?



Why New South Wales needs **strong federal nature laws**

NSW's Murray Darling River Basin, Monaro Tablelands and our alpine forests have been identified by scientists as “collapsing” ecosystems, meaning they have undergone such substantial negative changes they may not recover.

The Greater Bilby, an iconic species that was once widespread throughout NSW, is **Extinct in our state.**

Koala populations in NSW have fallen by 60% in 20 years – that's more than anywhere else in the country.

Existing laws are clearly failing to protect nature in NSW. The permanent clearing of native woody vegetation has increased three-fold since 2015, with an average of 35,000 hectares being destroyed each year. Habitat destruction impacts more threatened species than any other pressure, and yet in NSW, habitat continues to be bulldozed at an alarming rate.

Current environment laws do not hold those that destroy nature to account. At least 9 coal mines in NSW have received special Federal permission that allowed them to avoid penalties for failing to secure permanent protection of habitat within the required timeframe outlined on their original approval.

Australia's environment laws are broken and are clearly failing the people, places and wildlife of NSW.

Sources

Australian Conservation Foundation, *Aggravating extinction investigation*.

Bergstrom, DM et al. 2021. 'Combating ecosystem collapse from the tropics to the Antarctic', *Global Change Biology*.

Cox, L. 2021 'Coal companies allowed to delay environmental offsets on NSW mines for up to 10 years' *The Guardian*. 8 September.

NSW EPA 2022, Native vegetation summary ([online](#)).

Office of Environment and Heritage 2019, Bilby - profile ([online](#)).

Professor Graeme Samuel AC, *Independent review of the EPBC Act*. Final report: forward. 2020.