



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 108,104 from Victoria and 2,512 from your electorate of Maribyrnong, 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"The EPBC act is outdated and requires fundamental reform ...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 Victoria's 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 Victoria needs strong federal nature laws

Victoria's Mountain Ash forests and subalpine forests have been identified by scientists as "collapsing" ecosystems, meaning they have undergone such substantial negative changes they may not recover.

The very animal symbols of Victoria - the Leadbeater's Possum (faunal emblem) and the Helmeted Honeyeater (bird emblem) are both listed as **Critically Endangered species**. These animals are irreplaceable, they are only found here in Victoria.

Habitat destruction impacts more threatened species than any other pressure, yet here in Victoria, habitat continues to be bulldozed at an alarming rate. The state-owned logging company VicForests has been found in a court of law to have breached state logging regulations by destroying habitat for two threatened species - the Greater Glider, listed as Vulnerable, and the state's own Critically Endangered animal emblem, the Leadbeater's Possum. Despite bulldozing critical threatened species habitat, this logging is exempt from federal environment law. Do Victoria's iconic threatened species even stand a chance under current environmental laws?

We need strong federal laws that actually protect Victoria's plants, animals and ecosystems.

Sources

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

Drone shot of misty treetops Rainforest Kutini-Payamu (Iron Range) NP. Photo: Kerry Trapnell