



Extinction **wrapped 2024**

Changes to Australia's
national threatened species
list in the last year



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

Nature
needs us,
now

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. **We pay respect to their Elders past and present** and to the pivotal role that First Nations Peoples continue to play in **caring for Country across Australia.**

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Cover. Koala in tree *Photo.* mihtiander / iStock

Right. Blue Mountains National Park, New South Wales *Photo.* ChristianB / iStock

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Introduction

This report takes stock of the shameful state of animals, plants and habitats nationally threatened with extinction in Australia in 2024.

Last year, the Federal Minister for the Environment Tanya Plibersek said that “Australia has moved from the margins of international environmental leadership – right to the front.”

ACF’s Extinction Wrapped analysis paints a starkly different picture.

In 2024, despite a commitment to zero new extinctions, the amount of threatened species habitat green lighted to be destroyed by the Albanese Government more than doubled compared to the previous year.

The iconic koala had more habitat consigned to the bulldozers by our failing national nature laws than any other species.

Australia already has one of the worst extinction rates on Earth, and it’s getting worse. There are now 2,245 Australian ecosystems, plants and animals recognised nationally as being threatened with extinction.

The national laws that are meant to protect nature are failing miserably.

Our big backyard is still being bulldozed, mainly for the expansion of pasture for [beef production](#), and ecosystems are being drastically changed by the burning of climate-wrecking fossil fuels.

2024 proved the urgent need for action. We must stop bulldozing the bush.

Australia’s parliament will soon return for 2025. This presents a golden opportunity for our elected representatives to create real change that helps stop the bulldozers and climate wreckers.

The Albanese Government must deliver on its long-promised overhaul of Australia broken national nature laws - [86% of Australians want it to](#).

Koalas, pink cockatoos and greater gliders need strong laws that have the power to stop climate and nature-wrecking projects from being waved through.

Critical to this, is an independent and well-resourced regulator, or environmental protection agency, that can crack down on those destroying our forests, reefs and savannahs and prevent vested interested from influencing decisions that undermine the protection of nature.

We have the solutions to stop bulldozing the bush and to protect and restore Australia’s nature for people, wildlife, habitats and farms to thrive.

Now halfway through the decade, the time for action is now.



The iconic koala is an endangered species in Australia Photo. Miropa/ iStock

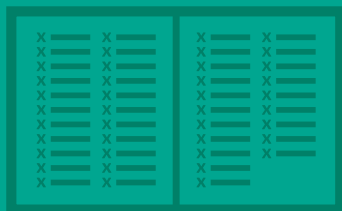
Key findings - by the numbers

In 2024

25,769
hectares

- the equivalent size of 92 Sydney CBDs - of threatened species habitat were approved to be destroyed by the Albanese Government across 48 projects.

That's more than twice as much as in 2023.



42
new species and
ecological
communities

were added to the national threatened species lists, with a total of

2,245 Australian plants, animals and ecosystems threatened with extinction at the time of this document's publication.



The koala had more habitat approved for destruction by the Albanese Government than any other threatened species.

An extraordinary 3,003 hectares of its home were consigned to the bulldozers.

That's an area three times the size of Sydney Airport and it's triple the amount of koala habitat that was approved to be destroyed in 2023.

5

species and ecological communities were downlisted

14

species and ecological communities were 'uplisted'

- in other words, assigned to a category closer to extinction.

40

more species and ecological communities

currently languish in the assessment doldrums, with no decision yet made about their status despite their assessment period expiring in 2024.



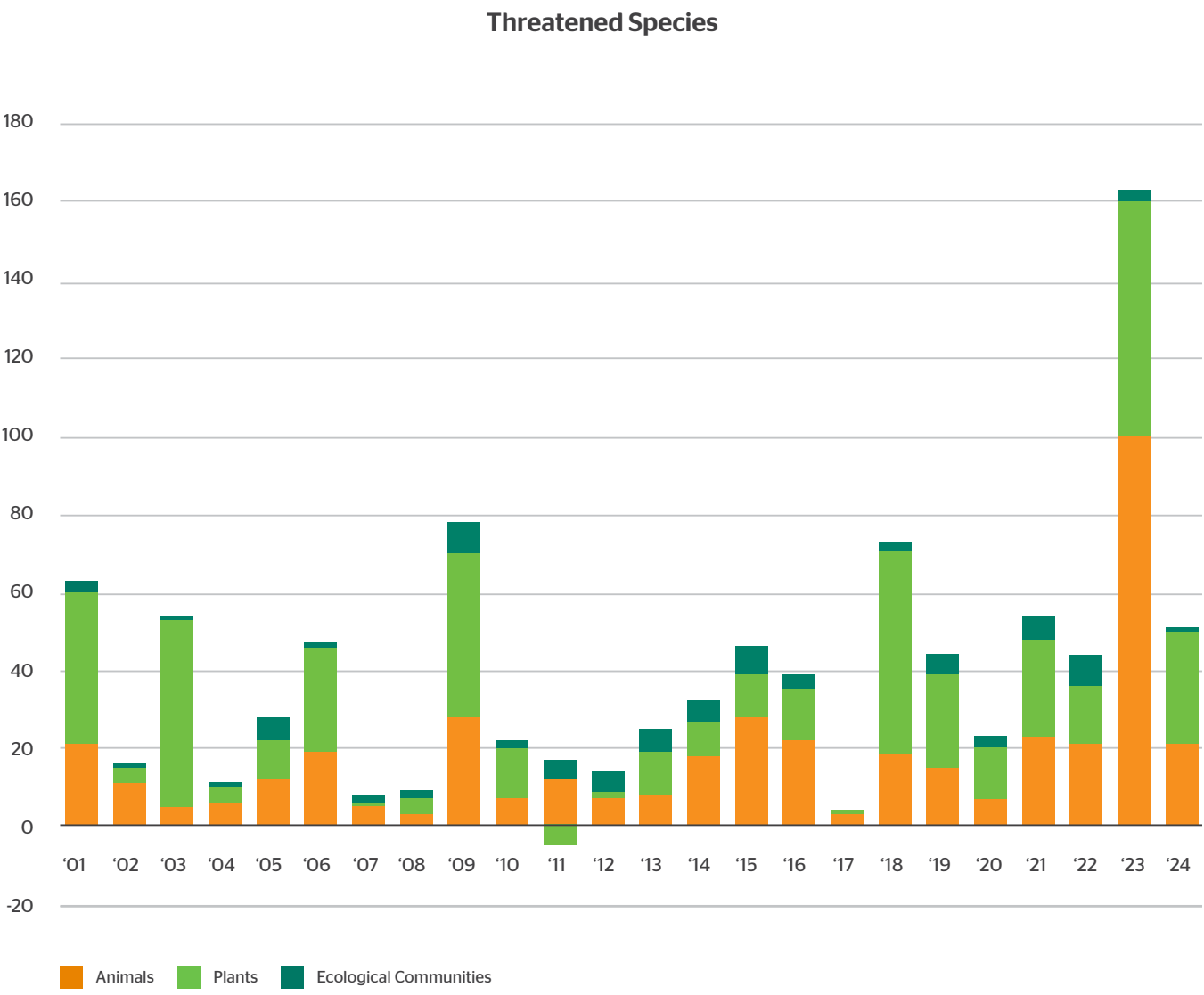
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new climate-wrecking fossil fuel projects were approved. None were rejected.

Changes to **Australia's national threatened species list**

In 2024, 56 Australian species and ecological communities were newly recognised nationally as being threatened with extinction or moving closer towards extinction.

The chart below shows Australian Government data of additions and uplistings to our national Threatened Species and Ecological Communities lists, minus deletions and downlistings, for each year after the list was established.



In 2024, 42 more species and habitats were nationally listed as being threatened by extinction and 14 species moved closer towards extinction.

	Animals
Birds	8
Reptiles	7
Fish	4
Frogs	1
Crustaceans	1
Total	21

	Plants
Banksias	2
Boronias	2
Fontaineas	1
Geebungas	1
Leionemas	1
Myrtles	2
Amaranthas	2
Daisies	1
Orchids	1
Peas	1
Spyriudiums	1
Tea-trees	2
Waratahs	1
Wattles	1
Native ivy	1
Total	20

Ecological communities	
King Island Scrub Complex	
Total	1

	Uplistings in 2024
Birds	3
Reptiles	2
Plants	9
Total	14

Total numbers on the national threatened species lists	
Fauna	666
Flora	1,472
Ecological communities	107
Total	2,245

The fact that the Federal Minister for the Environment has added to Australia’s threatened species lists is not the problem in itself.

In fact, officially recognising the plight of threatened species and places is an important part of the job that can afford them greater visibility and protection. Many species and habitats were nominated years ago, and Minister Plibersek’s department has continued to work its way through the backlog to make Australia’s threatened species lists better reflect reality.

However, the ever-growing number of threatened species and habitats does indicate that the situation for Australian nature is getting worse over time, and the threats to their existence are not being tackled.

Bulldozing the bush and the role of Australia's nature laws

The [2023 edition of this report](#) named 2024 as “the year the Albanese Government must deliver on its commitment to re-write Australia’s nature laws in line with the government’s promise of zero new extinctions”.

Another year has gone by, and, despite [86%](#) of Australians supporting stronger laws to protect nature, the Albanese Government failed to deliver them.

Instead, we’re still stuck with the flawed *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, a suite of laws that the Minister for Environment Tanya Plibersek described as “[not good for the environment](#)”.

She was right.

In 2024, a total of 25,769 hectares of habitat - 92 times the size of Sydney’s CBD - was approved for destruction by the Albanese Government under Australia’s broken nature laws. This is more than twice as much as in 2023.

More hectares of threatened species habitat were approved to be destroyed for mining (43%) than for any other sector.

Sadly, we know that much more bush and forest was bulldozed in 2024 than has been accounted for under our national nature laws.

For the destruction that was approved by the Albanese Government, these threatened species are set to lose the most habitat.

Threatened species	Status	Hectares of habitat approved to be destroyed
1. Koala	Endangered	3003.84
2. Pilbara leaf nosed-bat	Vulnerable	1910.7
3. Northern quoll	Endangered	1605.2
4. Superb parrot	Vulnerable	1604.97
5. Ghost bat	Vulnerable	1583.1
6. Pilbara olive python	Vulnerable	1583.1
7. Painted honeyeater	Vulnerable	1579.09
8. Corben’s long-eared bat	Vulnerable	1557.1
9. Large-eared pied bat	Endangered	1164.7
10. Regent honeyeater	Critically Endangered	929.35

Note: Almost half of the koala habitat approved to be destroyed was for a single [inland rail project](#) in New South Wales. In that state, koalas are recognised as being on a pathway to extinction by 2050 with habitat destruction the greatest threat to the species there.

Approved destruction is just the tip of the iceberg

The 25,769 hectares of threatened species habitat that the Albanese Government approved to be destroyed in 2024 is only a small piece of the picture.

This has been confirmed by scientists. One landmark study from 2019 found that [93%](#) of threatened species habitat destruction occurred without any federal government approval.

Further research published in 2024 by the University of Queensland found that of the over [1.5 million hectares](#) of vegetation bulldozed in Queensland and the Northern Territory alone in 2014-15 and 2019-2020, 65% was potentially not compliant with relevant laws, mainly Australia's national nature laws. And 91% of this was for pasture.

In 2024, ACF Investigations uncovered more evidence of threatened species habitat being destroyed with no federal assessment or approval. This included [bulldozing](#) of Central Hunter Valley eucalyptus forest and woodland in Singleton, New South Wales. Nine hectares of this critically endangered ecological community were destroyed without approval to make way for McDougall Business Park.

ACF has called for the protection of a further 28 hectares that are currently earmarked to be destroyed for the next stage of the project. This task should not be left up to a not-for-profit environmental organisation, and is precisely why the Albanese Government must deliver laws that genuinely protect nature and an [independent and well-resourced regulator](#) to enforce them.

More often than not, the bulldozing of Australia's bush and forests happens without any assessment or approval under our national nature laws.

Below. Bushland mapped as being a critically endangered ecological community destroyed to make way for the McDougall Business Park in Singleton, NSW *Photo.* Ari Balle-Bowness



Climate-wrecking project approvals and CO2 emissions

In 2024, 10 new or expanded fossil fuel projects were approved under Australia's national nature laws and 0 were rejected.

A further 3 new offshore gas-related projects were approved by Australia's offshore petroleum environmental management authority.

In 2024 the Albanese Government also [unsuccessfully](#) sought to reduce environmental protections and oversight for offshore gas and petroleum projects, through the [Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Legislation Amendment \(Safety and Other Measures\) Bill 2024](#), which would have enabled the fast-tracking of major new offshore gas projects. The bill was ultimately amended to remove those measures prior to its passage.

Preliminary national greenhouse gas emissions for the 2024 calendar year have been [published](#), indicating that Australia emitted around 441 million tonnes of CO2-e emissions. This represents a fall of less than 1% in emissions from 2023, but a moderate decline of -28% from 2005.

The latest government estimates show that Australia is largely [on track](#) to achieve its 2030 target of a 43% reduction in emissions, driven primarily by the shift to renewables in the electricity sector. However, over the same period to 2030, it is predicted that emissions from transport, industry and fossil fuel extraction [will rise by 10%](#).

So Australia's emissions are not dropping fast enough, and our climate targets of a 43% reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050 are [not aligned](#) with a 1.5C global trajectory. Australia needs to [cut emissions further](#) and faster ahead of 2035 to do our fair share to avert the worst impacts of climate change.

Climate change is a major threat to our threatened species and ecosystems. In 2024, [new information](#) identified Australian and New Zealand species as being among the most at risk of extinction globally due to climate change.

*Below. The Loy Yang Power Station, Traralgon, Victoria
Photo. Daria Nipot*



People power successes in 2024

While 2024 was a year of destruction and broken promises, it was also a year when people showed what can be achieved when we stand up for nature.

Communities across the country played a vital role in forcing governments to reject projects and change business practices that destroy our natural world.

Toondah Harbour saved from destructive development

People power prevailed in the five-year long battle by ACF Bayside and the Toondah Alliance to save the Ramsar protected wetland at Queensland's Toondah Harbour from Walker Corporation's destructive real estate development.

From a handful of dedicated nature-lovers to a movement of thousands, this win is a testament to the power of community.

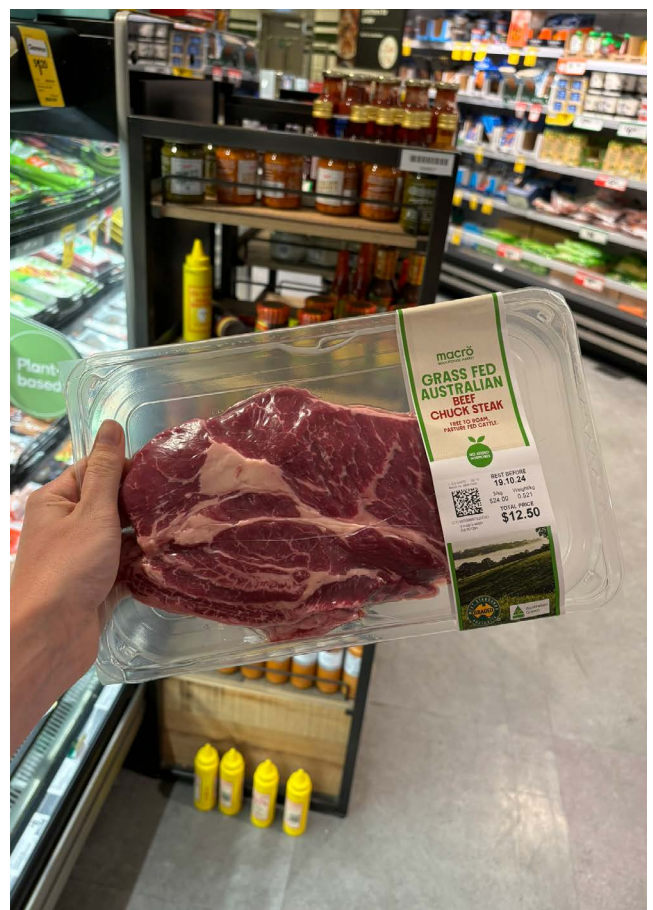


Walk for Toondah
Photo. Gregory Sullivan

Woolworths committed to deforestation-free beef

Australian consumers and shareholders, including 5,800 ACF supporters wrote to Woolworths demanding it get deforestation out of its beef supply chain.

In August 2024, the supermarket giant [announced](#) that it would do just that. As the biggest seller of beef to Australians, this shift has huge implications for nature and for people who want to make more sustainable food choices.



Australian steak at Woolworths
Photo. Annica Schoo

Mirrarr Traditional Owners saved Kakadu from future uranium mining

The Mirrar People led a successful campaign 25 years ago to stop uranium mining on their Country at Jabiluka. ACF proudly [walked alongside](#) the Mirrar on [this journey](#) and commended the Federal and Northern Territory Governments' July 2024 decision not to extend Energy Resources Australia's uranium mining lease over Jabiluka in Kakadu, which it had held for 40 years.

This was a huge win for the Mirrar Traditional Owners and a tribute to people's love and action for Kakadu, Australia's largest national park.



Jim Jim Falls, Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory *Photo. Umomos/ Shutterstock*

What's next?

Australians love nature, but it's in serious trouble. It's up to us to defend it.

We *can* live in a country where communities, farms, forests, reefs and wildlife thrive.

To get there, Australia *must* stop bulldozing the bush and say no more green lights for coal and gas polluters.

In the upcoming session of parliament, the Albanese Government *can* deliver new laws that actually protect nature from being destroyed.

The Prime minister *can* immediately back the creation of an independent and well- resourced environment protection agency that has the power to crack down on those profiting from bulldozing the Aussie bush.

In 2025, as the country heads into a federal election, we *can* populate the 48th parliament with people who understand that Australians care about nature and who have a sense of urgency and ambition to protect it.

The next parliament *can* end Australia's extinction shame by supporting farmers and businesses who actively protect and restore nature.

And Australia *can* join other countries globally that regulate businesses and their impact on nature, so that Australians *can* have the confidence that the food and products we buy are not destroying our irreplaceable forests and wetlands and sending wildlife towards extinction.

Iconic species like the koala simply will not survive if we continue fueling climate change and recklessly bulldozing their homes.

Together, we *can* protect the nature and wildlife that still flourish in our big backyard and work together to restore the places and ecosystems that have been damaged.

Nature needs us. Now.



Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies are vulnerable to extinction *Photo. Andreas Ruhz / Shutterstock*

Nature needs us, now

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