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Media statement

Dr Scamps: EPBC reforms in their current form will fail our nature

“I cannot in good conscience support these bills as there are so many loopholes, exemptions, omissions - and so much ministerial discretion - that there is no guarantee our nature will be protected. In fact, this bill may even weaken nature protections.”

“For 25 years our weak environment laws have not been fit for purpose, and the result has been devastating. We now have 19 ecosystems on the brink of collapse and Australia leads the world in mammal extinctions and sits alongside Brazil and Bolivia as a global deforestation hotspot.”

“I want urgent action to turn this around, but what’s on the table now has loopholes big enough to drive a giant heavy hauler through it. Whilst we do need greater certainty for business, we also need proper protections for nature, and these reforms catastrophically fail on the later.”

“Australian nature is too precious to settle for environmental reforms that don’t address the carnage of our native forests, animals, waterways, coastlines and landscapes.”

Key concerns:

- A broad and poorly defined ‘national interest’ exemption
- Native forest logging and land clearing exemptions remain
- Weakening of the water trigger, leaving rivers at risk from big developments
- No requirement to consider climate change impacts on nature
- Excessive ministerial discretion
- No independent appointment process for the new National Environmental Protection Agency
- Devolution of decision making to the states and territories

ENDS

Media contact: Alexandra (Lexie) Browning

E: media@sophiescamps.com.au **M:** 0413 349 764