

Friends,

We're forwarding this statement about the need to strengthen Australia's national environmental laws and keep them in the hands of the federal government. Please follow the links below for more details.



Dear Environmentalists

Last week, the independent review of Australia's national environment law, by Professor Graeme Samuel was released after much anticipation. The report confirmed our environment laws need reform, and they need it now.

We want to thank all of our supporters who took the time to make a submission to the review, which helped to secure the positive recommendations in the report. You've been with us every step of the way as we have worked to persuade the Government that this is a critical opportunity to strengthen not weaken the law that protects our precious nature.

Some of the key positive recommendations from the independent review are:

- A suite of new National Environment Standards,
- A statutory independent Environment Assurance Commissioner,
- An independent Office of Environment and Compliance (replicated at the state and territory level if they are accredited),
- Removal of the loophole for Regional Forest Agreements,
- A requirement for decision-makers to consider Indigenous views and knowledge,
- Increased investment in restoration by both Government and the private sector,
- A tightening of loopholes for wildlife trade.

The recommendations have the potential to deliver the reforms that nature needs. However, Professor Samuel pointedly warns that the government should “avoid the temptation to cherry-pick from a highly interconnected suite of recommendations”.

The centrepiece of the reforms he calls for are strong, binding National Environmental Standards. We agree standards are key to halting the extinction crisis we currently face. Without robust National Environment Standards, ecosystems will continue to collapse and extinctions will become more frequent.

[Ask for complete safeguards for our environment](#)

Unfortunately the Federal Government has indicated that it intends to press on with its bill to hand over approval powers for developments with ‘national environmental significance’ to the states and territories—a devolution process known as ‘one-stop shop’ or ‘single touch approvals’. They have also failed to commit to the National Environment Standards drafted by Professor Samuel and are proposing a much weaker set of standards.

If this ‘single touch approvals’ bill were to pass it would be disastrous for our natural environment. This is far from the kind of reform our wildlife deserves.

[Stop weak standards in their tracks](#)

We need you to keep the pressure on the Senate so that they reject the bill and insist on the reform that nature needs now. Ask your Federal MP and Senators to uphold the recommendations of the independent review, and reject the Government’s dangerous environment ‘streamlining’ bill which will increase the risk of species extinctions.

Thank you for standing up for our environment