

For
the
Future

Plan for
Biodiversity
Protection



South
Australian
Labor

Foreword

Australia has the highest mammal extinction rate in the world and around 12 per cent of South Australia's native species are threatened with extinction.¹ Recent global research estimates around 1 million species are threatened with extinction.² This extinction crisis threatens global food production and risks exacerbating the impact of climate change.

The importance of biodiversity is being increasingly well understood, but how to protect it, how to manage meeting human needs without causing further loss and how to restore healthy ecosystems is still being grappled with across the world. While we rightly focus on the threat posed by climate change, biodiversity loss is an equally serious issue that must be reversed if our children are to inherit a sustainable environment.

Labor will take biodiversity protection and restoration seriously. Alongside policies to strengthen the national park network and to invest in environmental work on private lands, this policy will ensure South Australia is at the forefront of the protection of nature.



Peter Malinauskas MP
SA Labor Leader

Acknowledgment of country.

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Custodians whose ancestral lands we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and respect their deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country. We also pay our respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their nations in South Australia, as well as those across Australia.

1. https://www.epa.sa.gov.au/soe-2018/files/13703_soer2018_biodiversity_issues_report.pdf

2. <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment>





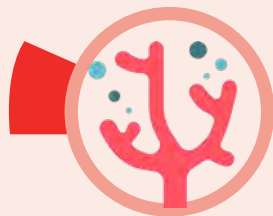
BIODIVERSITY IN CRISIS

NATURE'S UNPRECEDENTED DANGEROUS DECLINE

1 million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction:



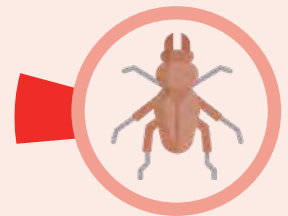
More than 40% of amphibian species



Almost 33% of reef-forming corals



Over 1/3 all marine mammals



A tentative estimate of 10% of insect species

Major drivers of species decline:



Land clearing



Pollution



Climate change



Bushmeat hunting and poaching



Overfishing



Invasive alien species



Human actions significantly have altered

3/4 of the land-based environment

66% of the marine environment



Over 1/3 of the global land surface, **NEARLY 75%** of freshwater resources devoted to crop or livestock production



The productivity of the global land surface was **REDUCED BY 23%** due to land degradation



Urban areas have more than **DOUBLED** since 1992

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Report 2019



A Malinauskas Labor Government's

COMMITMENT TO NATURE

COST: \$6 million

01

Introduce a **Biodiversity Act**, making sure conservation outcomes are fully integrated into how we all live sustainably and prosper for the long-term. This legislation will integrate the goals of the Native Vegetation Act, the National Parks and Wildlife Act and the Landscapes SA Act and put the protection of biodiversity for the long-term at the centre of these laws. The Biodiversity Act will incorporate the knowledge of Aboriginal South Australians in the management of land and respect for its ecosystems.

An entirely new, biodiversity-focused act would add legislative teeth to biodiversity conservation in this state.³

02

Create a **\$2 million Citizen Science Fund** to harness the power of South Australians who are enthusiastic about nature and want to contribute to the knowledge we collectively have about environmental conditions, as well as encouraging and valuing people's engagement with their local environment.

03

Increase **funding to the Conservation Council of South Australia by \$1 million** to ensure community voice is properly heard when decisions affecting the environment are being made. It is only by harnessing the power of community that we will be able to nurture and restore our environment. This funding will not be affected by whether community consultation coordinated by the Conservation Council is in favour of or opposed to government proposals. A good government should never fear community views.

3. SOER 2018 - Better Prospects for the Future of South Australia's Biodiversity (epa.sa.gov.au)



04

Establish a **\$3 million Biodiversity Coordination Unit** in the Department for Environment and Water to:

- ▶ **Tackling Pests, Weeds and Abundant Species**
Work with university researchers on management of the environmental impact of pests, weeds and abundant species.
- ▶ **Biodiversity Monitoring**
Create a register of past, ongoing, and planned revegetation and biodiversity restoration projects and use data from the register to prioritise future projects.

A persistent weakness with our assessments of the state of South Australia's environment is a lack of rigorous, long-term monitoring that clearly measures how our State's biodiversity values are changing over time. A coordinated, state-wide monitoring system could revolutionise not only how we understand the trending fate of our ecosystems, it would assuredly assist in planning better restoration and conservation plans over the coming decades.⁴

- ▶ **Using science to protect nature**
Support a high-level expert panel on biodiversity conservation.
- ▶ **Targeted Species Recovery**
Coordinate a taskforce on bringing back birds in the Mount Lofty Ranges with a \$1 million fund to support on ground initiatives.

12% of South Australia's native animal species are considered threatened with extinction, with the highest proportion of threatened species (23%) reported in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges. As an example, many South Australian bird species are declining at alarming rates, and consequently have some of the highest risks of extinction relative to almost everywhere else in the country.⁵

- ▶ **Landscape coordination**
Work with Landscape Boards on policies, priorities and actions to ensure the best science is shared across the state.

4. SOER 2018 - Better Prospects for the Future of South Australia's Biodiversity (epa.sa.gov.au)

5. SOER 2018 - Better Prospects for the Future of South Australia's Biodiversity (epa.sa.gov.au)

6. http://www.ncssa.asn.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=110:overview12&catid=51&Itemid=349

Woodland bird numbers in Mount Lofty Ranges plummet 45 per cent in 20 years

ABC Radio Adelaide / By Malcolm Sutton

Posted Tue 23 Mar 2021 at 11:33am, updated Tue 23 Mar 2021 at 12:43pm



Superb fairy-wrens like these near Bridgewater are in decline in the Mount Lofty Ranges. (ABC Radio Adelaide: Malcolm Sutton)

These are birds those of us who live in the Mt Lofty Ranges know and love, such as honeyeaters, Superb Fairy Wrens and Thornbills. These are common species that are now declining toward threatened species status, due to issues with land management, some inappropriate fire management practices and an increase in pests and weeds.

Associate Professor O'Connor reports that while the data tells a worrying story, there are actions around woodland restoration and conservation that can be taken to halt the decline of the woodland species, but that it needs to be done urgently.



Mount Lofty Ranges Woodland Birds Study⁶

