



The Victoria Naturally Alliance – a shared vision

MEDIA RELEASE

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Catchment report card reveals failing environment

An alarming report card from a Government advisory body has revealed Victoria's catchments are in dire condition and in need of urgent help, environment groups say.

The Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC) report card shows that Victoria's plants, animals, soils and waterways are severely degraded, despite millions of dollars and countless hours invested over the past 20 years.

The report states: "...despite our best management efforts, land degradation persists and, in many places, is worsening. In environmental and economic terms, the impact is profound." Page 44

It also reveals:

- A 50 per cent loss of waterbirds in just one year in Victoria's wetlands.
- Threatened plant species have increased by 7.8 per cent from 2002 to 2005.
- Threatened animal species have increased 5.7 per cent from 2000 to 2005.

Victorian National Parks Association executive director Matt Ruchel labelled the report "deeply disturbing".

"If plants and animals were money, we would be bankrupt," Mr Ruchel said. "Our economy depends on the vital services provided by the natural environment."

Victoria Naturally project leader Carrie Deutsch said it was unconscionable to allow the degradation of the environment to continue given the experience and degree of learning and understanding now available.

"Fortunately, the State Government has a White Paper process underway," Ms Deutsch said.

"But we want to see commitment from Premier John Brumby that he will use this process that has the commitment and interest from a wide range of stakeholders to address the issues that his VCMC have presented."

For interview

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The Victoria Naturally Alliance wants to see Victoria's native plants and animals protected from threats including climate change and habitat loss.
For more information go to www.victorianaturally.org.au.