



The Victoria Naturally Alliance – a shared vision

MEDIA RELEASE

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Inquiry reveals widespread fears

Submissions to the first stage of the State Government's Land and Biodiversity White Paper inquiry have revealed widespread fears for the state of Victoria's environment.

Concerns about threatened species, habitat loss, weak clearing controls and the spread of weeds and feral animals all featured heavily in submissions we've seen, said Carrie Deutsch from the Victoria Naturally alliance.

CSIRO figures show that 44% of Victoria's native plants and 30 per cent of the state's native animals are either extinct or officially threatened. According to a National Land and Water Resources Audit the highest number of threatened species in any one region of Australia occurs in north-western Victoria.

Victorians are waking up to the fact that our plants and animals are in a state of crisis, Ms Deutsch said.

Victoria Naturally has emphasised the importance of facing up to this crisis, especially in the face of climate change, and the need for a major boost in conservation efforts to recover our environmental debt.

Not only should we do this so that we pass on a healthier environment to our grandchildren but it also makes economic sense. Stressed ecological systems cost the economy money - look at salinity.

This will require clear, science-based targets for biodiversity, a roadmap to reach them and sufficient funding. Without these steps our ecosystems face collapse.

We're calling on the government to massively boost conservation efforts and turn the tables on an extinction crisis threatening to take place right in our back yard.

The Victoria Naturally alliance is made up of the Victorian National Parks Association, Australian Conservation Foundation, Environment Victoria, The Wilderness Society, Bush Heritage Australia, Trust for Nature, Invasive Species Council and Greening Australia (Vic).

For comment: Phone Carrie Deutsch, Victoria Naturally Project Leader on 0438 003 037. For further information phone John Sampson on 0421 633 299.



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.