



The Victoria Naturally Alliance – a shared vision

MEDIA RELEASE

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Victoria needs to rise to biodiversity challenge

On the eve of the UN's International Day for Biological Diversity, and in the face of climate change, eight environment groups have joined forces to call on the State Government to redouble efforts to enable Victorians to protect and restore wildlife habitat.

The Victoria Naturally alliance, which includes the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Victorian National Parks Association and Bush Heritage Australia, says the day is a timely reminder of the challenges Victorians face in preserving and restoring our fast-disappearing plants and animals.

“With so many unique and irreplaceable plants and animals, Victoria's loss is the world's loss. At the same time, we have an incredible opportunity to weave resilience back into our embattled landscape,” Victoria Naturally Project Leader Carrie Deutsch said.

Victoria has cleared a greater proportion of native bushland than any other state in Australia. Habitat loss is the main reason why close to a third of the state's native animals are either extinct or threatened.

“With climate change bearing down on the land, it's going to be even more critical to protect and restore habitat if we're to keep our wildlife and maintain critical life-support services,” Ms Deutsch said.

Global warming will force many native species to migrate further south or to higher ground as they try to escape the heat, but with much of the Victorian landscape in tatters, they may find it difficult if not impossible to move between habitat areas.

Ms Deutsch said that just as every bit of intact bushland will count in the climate change fight, so will every bit we can put back through revegetation programs.

“Victoria has the wealth and a proud history of community conservation to build from. It's an investment in our kids and their right to enjoy a healthy, connected environment,” she said.

“Now, more than ever, the Government needs to commit to urgent, strategic action, across whole landscapes. All Victorians can play a role in turning our extinction crisis around. People on larger holdings of land are especially important,” she said.

Victoria Naturally intends to play a prominent role in the State Government's recently-launched Land and Biodiversity White Paper, making sure it delivers a roadmap for the next generation of conservation efforts.

For further comment:

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For more information:

International Day for Biological Diversity is promoted by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity www.biodiv.org.

The first stage of the Victorian Government's Land and Biodiversity White Paper process is available on the Department of Sustainability and Environment website: www.dse.vic.gov.au/landwhitepaper/.

For more information on Victoria Naturally, contact John Sampson on 0421 633 299 or visit www.vnpa.org.au and click on the Victoria Naturally link.



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.