

Media release

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Global Nature Summit a welcome opportunity for Australian conservation

Minister for Environment Tanya Plibersek's announcement that Australia will host a Global Nature Positive Summit has been welcomed by the private land conservation sector. Today's announcement was made at the UN Biodiversity Conference, COP15, in Montreal Canada, where the world is in the final throes of seeking to secure an ambitious agenda for nature.

Minister Plibersek said that Australia needed "to help supercharge private investment in protecting and repairing our environment."

"That's why the Summit will focus on how to encourage private finance for on-the-ground nature repair projects, such as restoring mangroves, protecting waterways, and re-establishing habitat for threatened species."^[1]

Dr Jody Gunn, CEO of the Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA), Australia's peak body for private land conservation, strongly supports the minister's ambition:

"As one of the few developed countries with megadiversity – amazingly high biodiversity – Australia is uniquely positioned to leverage the success of its strong land and water management sector, including its Indigenous Protected Areas and conservation on privately managed lands. We are perfectly placed to demonstrate to the world what can still be achieved in the face of challenging conditions."

"Attracting international finance and philanthropy is one key part of the puzzle, and the role of government – investing public funds and adopting the right policies – is another. At the federal level, this means delivering a well-designed, high-integrity nature positive biodiversity market alongside the right tax and investment settings, as well as effective environmental law reform."

"ALCA and its members deliver on the third key element, namely, the on-the-ground capacity and existing domestic investment that demonstrates Australia can get the job done. Combined, ALCA's members already invest more than \$260 million a year. Our sector is primed to deliver the conservation success at the scale we will need to safeguard Australia's biodiversity into the future."

"While international finance and philanthropy cannot replace the role and necessity of public funding, it builds the confidence the conservation sector needs for them to co-invest. A Global Nature Positive Summit will be an opportunity to showcase to the world the expertise of Australia's private land conservation sector and help drive the multiplier effect from international funds. ALCA will be looking to partner with the government to deliver a successful Summit."

The Minister's announcement occurs amidst the challenge to deliver an ambitious global agreement at COP15.

In announcing the summit while at COP15 in Montreal, Minister Plibersek has laid the foundations for continuing the momentum of COP15 and demonstrating Australia's intention to take a lead role acting on the nature crisis.

^[1] See: <https://minister.dcceew.gov.au/plibersek/media-releases/australia-host-global-nature-positive-summit>

“Throughout the challenging negotiations in Montreal, Australia has led by example on its commitment to no new extinctions and on protecting 30 per cent of land and seas by 2030.

“While the high-level ministerial meetings continue, negotiating on the final sticking points including resource mobilisation, a global summit hosted in 2024 would provide further opportunities to bridge the global \$700 billion nature finance gap.

“The business sector, First Nations and community groups have all had a strong presence in Montreal. They are looking for leadership and for further opportunities to collaborate,” Dr Gunn said.

The Commonwealth’s 2021 State of the Environment Report details the scale of the challenge facing Australia:

“Overall, the state and trend of the environment of Australia are poor and deteriorating as a result of increasing pressures from climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, pollution and resource extraction. Changing environmental conditions mean that many species and ecosystems are increasingly threatened. Multiple pressures create cumulative impacts that amplify threats to our environment, and abrupt changes in ecological systems have been recorded in the past 5 years...”

Our inability to adequately manage pressures will continue to result in species extinctions and deteriorating ecosystem condition, which are reducing the environmental capital on which current and future economies depend. Social, environmental and economic impacts are already apparent.”^[2]

There were two shining lights in the state of the environment report, demonstrated to be delivering more positive outcomes in a grim overall report, private land conservation and Indigenous land and sea management. These must be scaled up.

About ALCA

The Australian Land Conservation Alliance is the peak national body representing organisations that work to conserve, manage and restore nature on privately managed land. We represent our members and supporters to grow the impact, capacity and influence of private land conservation to achieve a healthy and resilient Australia.

ALCA member land conservation efforts stretch across over 3 million square kilometres with more than 4,000 landholders. We have over 70,000 supporters and our combined annual turnover exceeds \$260 million.

Together ALCA and its members address some of the most pressing conservation issues across the country, including restoring endangered ecosystems, building the protected area estate, tackling invasive species, expanding private conservation finance and funding, and using nature-based solutions to tackle climate change.

Through their active land management, ALCA member organisations are deeply embedded in regional communities and economies, providing jobs, securing significant investment, and safeguarding remaining native habitat, with its many positive spillover effects for community, wellbeing and food security. We seek to demonstrate the role and value of private land conservation as a cornerstone of the Australian economy.

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^[2] See: Government of Australia, 2021 State of Environment Report; <https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/overview/key-findings>

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