



MEDIA RELEASE

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS

Inquiry into Australia's biodiversity in a changing climate

*Chair: Tony Zappia MP
Deputy Chair: Mal Washer MP*

Climate Change, biodiversity and the Australian Alps

The House Committee on Climate Change, Environment and the Arts is holding a public hearing in Canberra this Friday morning as part of its inquiry into Australia's biodiversity in a changing climate.

The inquiry is examining biodiversity and climate change in relation to nationally important ecosystems, with particular regard to terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems; the role of connectivity between ecosystems; impacts on human communities; and strategies for adaptation, sustainable resource use, and enhancing community engagement.

During a recent visit to the NSW Snowy Mountains, the Committee viewed some of Australia's rare and unique alpine ecosystems and heard from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service officers about how these ecosystems are being affected by both climate change and other environmental stressors, such as invasive species. The Committee also met with representatives of the Great Eastern Ranges initiative and the local Kosciuszko to Coast group to learn about landscape connectivity programs underway in the area.

The Committee Chair, Mr Tony Zappia MP, said 'It was clear during our visit to Charlotte Pass earlier this month that climate change will affect alpine species and ecosystems in complex ways. There will be winners as well as losers, and the precise interactions taking place are not thoroughly understood. What is certain is that the current distribution of species and ecosystems is changing, and the extent that species and ecosystems are lost forever will depend on how much resilience can be built into ecosystems through good management and control of both existing and emerging threats to biodiversity.'

'The Committee looks forward to exploring these issues in more detail at the public hearing on Friday', he added.

Details of the public hearing are as follows:

Time: 8.30 am

Date: Friday, 2 March 2012

Location: Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra

8.30am	Dr Graeme Worboys and Mr Roger Good
9.15am	Great Eastern Ranges initiative
10.15am	Research Centre for Applied Alpine Ecology
11.00am	National Parks Australia Council

The public hearing will be broadcast live at: http://www.aph.gov.au/News_and_Events/Watch_Parliament

Further details about the inquiry, including the terms of reference, can be obtained from the Committee's website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/ccea>

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Tony Zappia, on (02) 6277 4147 (Parliament House) and (08) 8265 3100 (electorate office)

For inquiry information: please contact the secretariat on (02) 6277 4580, email ccea.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ccea>