
From:
Sent: Tuesday, 16 July 2024 9:37 AM
To: Committee, EC (SEN)
Subject: Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Nature Positive (Environment Information Australia) Bill 2024 [Provisions] and related bills

Dear Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the Senate Inquiry into the provisions of the Nature Positive Bills.

I am writing as a bird and nature lover who is deeply concerned about the state of Australian nature. The laws that are meant to protect the birds and places I love are failing. One in six Australian birds is now at risk of extinction.

While the bills to establish Environment Information Australia (EIA) and a new federal Environment Protection Agency (EPA) are a step in the right direction, they fall significantly short of what's necessary to stop nature destruction and halt extinctions in Australia, as they will be enforcing and informing existing broken laws.

These Bills fail to deliver strong, legally enforceable national environmental standards that should be the foundation of any national environmental law reform.

I hold serious concerns that if these Bills are passed without amendments to strengthen the institutions they establish, and without a commitment by this Government to introduce and pass strong national environmental standards, they will not make any real difference to protecting and restoring nature.

I urge the Committee to recommend the following in their Report to the Senate:

1. That amendments are passed to create the legislative framework to enable the development and implementation of National Environment Standards.
2. The Nature Positive (Environment Information Australia) Bill 2024 is amended to:
 - a. include a definition of "Nature Positive" that is consistent with our international commitments; and
 - b. task by statute that the EIA monitor and evaluate the development and implementation of threatened species conservation plans and provide an annual report to Parliament on progress.
3. The Nature Positive (Environment Protection Australia) Bill 2024 is amended so that it is governed by an independent Board of suitably qualified members, reporting to a joint Parliamentary Committee.

Australia is facing an extinction crisis now. We cannot afford to miss this once-in-a-generation opportunity to get it right. A piecemeal approach without strong environmental standards is not sufficient and could even leave nature worse off than before.

Please advocate for strong amendments to these bills and for the comprehensive package of nature law reforms this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely,

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