

My name is Professor Iain Gordon and I Chair the Threatened Species Scientific Committee. The Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC), is a statutory advisory body appointed by the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water (Hon. Murray Watt). The TSSC is comprised of 12 members of the scientific community that cover a range of disciplines across population biology to plant, animal and marine interests to science policy integration related to fulfillment of its function under the Act. The function of the TSSC is to:

- (a) Advise the Minister in relation to recovery plans, threat abatement plans and approved conservation advice;
- (b) advise the Minister on the amendment and updating of lists of threatened species and ecological communities and threatening processes;
- (c) advise the Minister, at his or her request, on matters relating to the administration of this Act;

The TSSC has long recognised the importance of undertaking environmental reform to improve the trajectory of Australian biodiversity. Our natural places are in decline and much of our biodiversity occurs nowhere else on Earth. Protecting this rich ecological and cultural heritage requires laws and regulations which fairly and transparently weigh-up and rectify cumulative human impacts on biodiversity. The TSSC therefore commends the Government's commitment to long-awaited reform of the EPBC Act based on the principles identified in the Samuel Review. There are several, areas, that the TSSC has comments on our written submission including the letter of expectations from the Minister to the TSSC, multiple/cumulative impacts on species and ecological communities (including climate change), and the protection statements.

Apart from that, there is nothing within the Reform that appears to affect the roles and function of the TSSC and we stand ready to continue to provide our independent scientific advice in support of positive outcomes for Australia's unique fauna and flora.