



Threatened Species Commissioner

Terms of Reference

Background

The Threatened Species Commissioner brings a new national focus and effort to address the growing number of plants and animals in Australia that are faced with extinction.

The Commissioner, sitting within the Australian Government Department of the Environment, champions the development and implementation of practical conservation actions designed to secure priority national threatened species in the wild for at least the next 100 years.

An important part of the Commissioner's role is bringing together partners to deliver the agreed programme of conservation actions for priority threatened species - whether through funding or contributing other skills and expertise.

The Commissioner also leads efforts to report on the outcomes of conservation actions for priority threatened species, including the effectiveness of specific investments and achievements in terms of the goals of securing priority species in the wild.

A key role for the Commissioner is to work collaboratively with all levels of government, scientists, the non-profit sector, industry and the community to build on new initiatives and strategic approaches to threatened species conservation being trialled and implemented across the country; to better coordinate conservation effort; and to share information about these activities.

The work of the Commissioner complements but does not duplicate or override the important statutory responsibilities of the Threatened Species Scientific Committee.

The Commissioner also draws upon a group of informal expert advisors in developing a programme of conservation actions for priority threatened species.

Roles/responsibilities

In the short term (first 12 months):

- Work with stakeholders to identify priority nationally listed threatened species for which conservation actions are likely to be successful.
- Work with stakeholders to identify the highest priority actions to secure those species in the wild for at least the next 100 years.
- Identify and secure partners and resources to implement and monitor this programme of high priority actions over the longer term.
- Contribute to a process of reform to simplify and streamline the statutory recovery planning process.

In the medium to long term (1 – 5 years):

- Advise on and direct conservation actions in priority national threatened species recovery programmes in collaboration with the programme coordinators.
- Develop a strategic approach to threatened species conservation, including a prioritisation framework for species and conservation actions, building on government, non-government and community-based threatened species initiatives.
- Work closely with the Threatened Species Scientific Committee to strengthen the connection between the statutory listing and recovery planning processes and the implementation of conservation actions.
- Identify opportunities for longer term resourcing models, including co-investment and partnerships, to support the threatened species conservation programme.
- Monitor the effectiveness of priority conservation actions and report to the Minister and to the public.

Outcomes

- Implementation of conservation actions for priority nationally listed species.
- Priority threatened species are secured in the wild for at least the next 100 years.
- More integrated, complementary threatened species conservation efforts at a national level.
- Targeted, practical and cost effective investment in threatened species conservation actions.
- Clear and accessible public reporting on effectiveness of threatened species conservation actions.
- A more strategic approach to threatened species conservation to better inform government policy, planning and investment.