



Think Globally. Act Locally!

## Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

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## MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 6 January 2025

### Re: **Australia Faces Urgent Environmental Threats as Deforestation, Climate Change, and Pollution Drive Species to Extinction**

Australia is in the midst of a severe environmental crisis, with deforestation, habitat destruction, and climate change pushing native species toward extinction and threatening ecosystems nationwide. Conservation groups, including the [Australian Conservation Foundation](#) and [WWF Australia](#), are urging swift action to reverse these damaging trends and safeguard Australia's biodiversity.

#### **Deforestation: An Urgent National Issue**

Australia has one of the highest deforestation rates among developed nations, with vast forests are cleared for agriculture, urban expansion, and infrastructure. The resulting habitat destruction fragments ecosystems, putting at risk native wildlife like koalas, greater gliders, and bird species. Habitat loss is the leading cause of species being listed as endangered or threatened.



Photo by [gryffyn m](#) on [Unsplash](#)

According to [WWF Australia](#), the country has lost 27 million hectares of forest since 1990, contributing not only to biodiversity loss but also to worsening climate change by removing natural carbon sinks. This environmental degradation is pushing many species closer to extinction.

#### **Soil Erosion and Land Degradation**

Deforestation has also left Australia's soils vulnerable to erosion. Without vegetation, wind and water strip away topsoil, degrading farmland and reducing agricultural productivity. The sediment runoff from eroded soils is clogging waterways and damaging marine ecosystems, including the Great Barrier Reef.

#### **Climate Change: Intensifying Environmental Pressures**

Climate change is exacerbating Australia's environmental challenges. Increasingly severe bushfires, droughts, and floods are putting immense pressure on ecosystems weakened by deforestation and habitat loss. The devastating 2019-2020 "Black Summer" bushfires, which burned 12 million hectares of land and displaced or killed an estimated 3 billion animals, underscore the urgency of addressing climate-related impacts.

#### **Weak Environmental Laws and Government Inaction**

Australia's current environmental laws are inadequate to address the scale of the crisis. Conservation groups are calling for stronger legislation and better enforcement to halt deforestation and protect threatened species. Environmentalists also urge the government to adopt more ambitious climate goals, as Australia remains one of the highest per capita carbon emitters globally.

## **Water Security and Contamination**

Deforestation and climate change are straining Australia's water resources, disrupting natural water cycles, and increasing the risk of contamination. Rivers and waterways are increasingly polluted by agricultural runoff, industrial waste, and sediment, threatening both human populations and wildlife. Water security is a growing concern, particularly for rural and Indigenous communities already affected by prolonged droughts.

## **Endangered Wildlife and Invasive Species**

Australia's unique wildlife faces an extinction crisis, with species like the koala and greater glider suffering from habitat loss. More than 1,700 species of animals and plants are listed as threatened under national law, with experts warning this number will continue to rise unless immediate action is taken.

Pollution and invasive species are compounding these challenges. Nutrient pollution from fertilisers leads to algal blooms in waterways, suffocating aquatic life. Meanwhile, invasive species like feral cats and foxes prey on vulnerable wildlife, further threatening native species.

## **A Call to Action**

Australia must act now to halt deforestation, restore habitats, and address climate change. Conservationists are urging the government to strengthen environmental laws, invest in reforestation projects, and commit to more ambitious climate action. Without these steps, Australia risks losing its unique biodiversity and the health of its ecosystems.

To contribute to protecting wildlife and their habitats, you can donate to:

- WWF Australia: [Protect Wildlife Homes](#)
- Australian Conservation Foundation: [Stop Deforestation](#)

It is time for the government, businesses, and communities to unite to protect Australia's natural heritage for future generations.



Photo by [Terra Raponi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank Ondrus". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager– HOPE Inc., ph. 07 4639 2135

*Written by Nancy Maria – HOPE admin volunteer (QLD)*