

Media release

Thursday 3 December 2009 (embargoed until Friday 4 December 2009)

Boobook Declaration

Environment groups call for action in 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Forty environment groups from across Australia today called for the Australian Government to act decisively to protect biodiversity in 2010, the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity.

The groups, representing hundreds of thousands of Australians, want the Government to triple biodiversity investment to \$9 billion over three years for on-ground work, stewardship payments, water buy-back, protected area extension and management, research, education and training.

"In the International Year of Biodiversity we should celebrate the beauty and diversity of the natural world but also recognise that Australia's biodiversity is in serious trouble.

"The warnings are coming thick and fast that ecosystems ranging from coral reefs to woodlands and grasslands are sliding towards ecological collapse.

"Protecting our biodiversity is as important for Australia's future as defending our territory and we are calling on the Government to act decisively to stem the loss, starting in 2010", said Aila Keto, President of the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society.

"Safeguarding biodiversity is good news for the climate because it is one of the quickest and most effective ways of keeping carbon locked up in the landscape and out of the atmosphere.

"We also know that investment in protecting and managing biodiversity secures jobs as well as social and economic rejuvenation, especially in regional and remote Australia.

"With 2010 just weeks away, we have written to the three major parties asking them to support the Boobook Declaration and make 2010 the turning point for nature in Australia", said Luke Chamberlain from the Wilderness Society.

Note

The Boobook Declaration calls on the Australian Government to

1. Acknowledge the critical importance of safeguarding biodiversity as part of Australia's climate change response and commit to correspondingly urgent action to address the systemic drivers of biodiversity loss.
2. Increase investment in biodiversity and ecosystem protection, restoration and management to at least \$9 billion over the three years to 2012 and establish an independent consultative process into future funding and stewardship of Australia's terrestrial, aquatic and marine biodiversity.
3. Restore and increase publicly funded research capacity.
4. Develop education and training programs for all sectors of the community.

The International Year of Biodiversity is designated by the United Nations to celebrate biodiversity and raise awareness of the huge loss of biodiversity on Earth.

Full text of the Boobook Declaration: www.boobook.org.au (www.boobook.org.au/draft before 4 Dec)
International Year of Biodiversity: <http://www.cbd.int/2010/welcome/>

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