

Australia's Nature and Climate Declaration to COP31 and COP17

9 October 2026

We are Australia's leaders in land conservation. As we gather in Nipaluna / Hobart for the 2026 ALCA Conference – 'Nature-Climate Action: Our Opportunity to Lead', we urgently call on the Government of Australia to join us in action for nature and climate.

As a formally affiliated pre-COP31 event, we note:

1. the many and varied inextricable links between nature and climate;
2. the continued trajectory of decline in real (inflation-adjusted) funding for nature from the governments of Australia;
3. that the Government of Australia's funding for nature is less than 0.1% of the Commonwealth Budget – less than 10c in every \$100;
4. the critical role of First Nations in caring and stewarding Country, and the loss of culture that is resulting from the decline in Australia's nature and from climate change impacts;
5. that nature is the only intervention we can deploy at scale to remove and store carbon from the atmosphere caused by emissions, and large-scale nature protection and restoration will be required to deliver the Government of Australia's ambitions for Net Zero, as evidenced in Treasury modelling in the Government's Agriculture and Land Sector Plan¹;
6. that Australia has committed to Targets 2 and 3² (amongst others) in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and under *Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024-2030*³, has committed to:
 - a. *"Protect and conserve 30% of Australia's landmass and 30% of Australia's marine areas by 2030"*;
 - b. ensure that *"Priority degraded areas are under effective restoration by 2030"*; and to
 - c. *"Minimise the impact of climate change on biodiversity"*.
7. that Australia has committed to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to deliver net zero emissions by 2050, and 62-70% reduction in net national greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 emissions levels by 2035⁴, and has legislated its Net Zero commitment⁵;

8. that despite these international and domestic commitments, there is no dedicated Commonwealth funding for the large-scale ecological restoration that is needed to deliver on Net Zero, Australia's Strategy for Nature, and those international commitments;
9. the continued lack of government investment in other Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to climate adaptation, mitigation, landscape resilience, and disaster resilience; and
10. that the Government of Australia's focus on mandated corporate climate risk disclosure is misaligned with growing international guidance – including that of the World Economic Forum – which highlights the intrinsic connection between climate and nature; addressing climate-related risks effectively requires solutions that consider both climate and nature; Australia's current emphasis on climate risk disclosure alone is unlikely to achieve its intended outcomes until it is complemented by mandated nature-related disclosures.

We thus call upon the Government of Australia, and especially the COP31 President for Negotiations, the Australian Minister for Climate Change and Energy the Hon Chris Bowen MP, and the Australia Government delegations to both COP31 (the Climate COP) and COP17 (the Nature COP) to:

1. Reverse the chronic underinvestment in Commonwealth funding for biodiversity and deliver Australia's ambitions and commitments to nature and climate, allocating at least 1% of the Commonwealth budget for nature;
2. Act and deliver on our region's key priority to keep the 1.5°C temperature goal within reach;
3. Strive for the highest achievable ambition for climate and nature at both COP31 (from 9 to 20 November 2026) and COP17 (from 19 to 30 October 2026); and to
4. Formally respond to Australia's Nature and Climate Declaration to COP31 and COP17 Declaration.

¹ Figures 6 and 9, *Agriculture and Land Sector Plan*, Government of Australia, 2025;
<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/farm-food-drought/climatechange/ag-and-land-sector-plan>

² <https://www.cbd.int/article/cop15-final-text-kunming-montreal-gbf-221222>

³ <https://www.dccew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/australias-strategy-for-nature-2024-2030.pdf>

⁴ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2025-09/Australias%20Second%20NDC.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2022A00037/latest/text>