

The Hon Tony Burke MP

Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Draft National Wildlife Corridors Plan

Media release
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The Gillard Government's commitment to build a network of national wildlife corridors is moving ahead with the release today of the Draft National Wildlife Corridors Plan.

The Draft National Wildlife Corridors Plan is a proposed strategy for the Government to restore and manage ecological connections in the Australian landscape.

The Draft has been prepared by an independent Advisory Group chaired by the Hon Bob Debus, in consultation with the Australian Government.

Environment Minister Tony Burke said the Advisory Group's plan aimed to restore native wildlife and rebuild the ecological functions in the landscape, including the long-term retention of natural stores of carbon.

"Sometimes the areas that are put into conservation from a connected landscape are so isolated that they lack the resilience that comes from connected landscape," Mr Burke said.

"You can look at a map of reserved areas and sometimes it looks like someone has dipped a toothbrush in paint and splattered different unconnected dots across the land.

"Corridors are about connecting those dots; it's a way of improving resilience and ensuring that we are protecting nature in a way that preserves it for generations to come.

"National wildlife corridors would lay a foundation for a new, collaborative, whole-of-landscape approach to conserving biodiversity. It's also designed to help strengthen the resilience in our native landscapes against climate change."

Mr Burke said national wildlife corridors would be based on voluntary cooperation and the existing efforts of communities, landholders, governments and industry.

"Any linking of the corridors would only be done through existing methods of putting land into conservation such as the work of Landcare volunteers, or when farmers have chosen to be part of environmental stewardship," he said.

"It's important that landholders understand that wildlife corridors will have no impact on land except through the voluntary agreement of the land holder. The rights which landowners have within the law would not change under any national wildlife corridors plan."

The Advisory Group proposes new national wildlife corridor legislation as a mechanism for the nomination, assessment and listing of national wildlife corridors. The Government will work through all the recommendations before formulating a response.

The Government and the Advisory Group will undertake targeted consultations with stakeholders. Anyone interested is invited to submit comments to the Environment Department. The public comment period closes on 20 April 2012.

National Wildlife Advisory Corridors Plan Advisory Group

Name	Affiliation
The Hon Bob Debus	Independent Chair
Kym Cheatham	Ecotourism Australia
Professor Steve Dovers	Fenner School of Environment and Society, ANU
Debra Goostrey	Urban Development Institute of Australia
Melissa George	Indigenous Advisory Committee
Brett de Hayr	National Landcare Facilitator
Dr Judy Henderson	Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority
Doug Humann	Bush Heritage Australia
Angus Hume	Natural resource management / agriculture advisor
Vicki Jo Russell	Australian Landcare Council
Dr Paul Sinclair	Australian Conservation Foundation
Felicity Wishart	The Wilderness Society
Deb Kerr	National Farmers Federation

The draft National Wildlife Corridors Plan is available online at:
www.environment.gov.au/wildlife-corridors.