



Restoration Decade Alliance, Australia

Australian Restoration organisations supporting the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

28th February 2022

Open Letter to all Policy Makers

Re: Assisting with meeting Australia's commitment to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

The global community is 6 months into the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration - an initiative that calls for urgent and resounding restoration action to reduce environmental impacts and redouble efforts globally.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is mandated by a UN General Assembly resolution representing all Member States (see [resolution](#)). Because Australia is one of the supporting Member States of the UN, our nation is automatically bound to a commitment to this UN Decade.

In response – and to assist our Federal and State governments, industries and communities in our efforts to support the UN Decade – an Alliance of leading Australian restoration organisations has formed. This Alliance is guided by a broad set of strategies and principles encapsulated in our guiding document, the [Darwin Agreement](#). Sixteen Foundation Members of the ongoing Alliance are in the process of being joined by scores of state-level and regional-level restoration bodies to uphold the Darwin Agreement and promote the goals of the UN Decade (see list of Foundation members supporting this letter below).

Through this letter we, the Restoration Decade Alliance, are reaching out to all current and future Federal government Ministers and Shadow Ministers to strengthen Australia's environmental protection and restoration actions and policies. Our Alliance draws together very high levels of restoration expertise, skills and knowledge about Australian ecosystem restoration, as evidenced by the proven performance of our members over more than four decades. We invite governments to work with us as a source of independent expertise to help Australia meet improved ecosystem restoration outcomes for this critical decade.

With this in mind, the Restoration Decade Alliance calls upon the Federal Government to:

1. Acknowledge and promote the climate mitigation and adaptation role played by large, interconnected, intact and restored native vegetation;
2. Formally reinforce and promote its commitment to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration through communications to all its relevant departments and agencies, industry and community;
3. Link this Restoration Decade commitment to government communications about Australia's UNFCCC COP26 targets and the SDGs relating to protection and restoration of ecosystems;
4. Collaborate with the Restoration Decade Alliance on the development of a long-term National Restoration Plan that includes ambitious yet attainable targets for restoration, addressing urgent environmental needs and drawing on our practical experience for their implementation;
5. Accelerate negotiations with state governments and private landholders to reduce and reverse the rate of land clearing, establish a date for achieving *a net increase in native vegetation cover*, and cease all old growth native forest logging by 2025;

6. Strengthen incentives (such as through Emissions Reduction Fund methodologies and Biodiversity Stewardship schemes) for private landholders to protect existing habitats, avoid further land clearing, and undertake and monitor ecosystem restoration;
7. Strengthen policy and legislation to nationally protect and monitor at least 30% of coastal, marine, river, wetland and terrestrial ecosystems by 2030 in line with global '30 by 30' aspirations.
8. Re-instate a dedicated land acquisition fund within the Australian Government's National Reserve System Program in consultation with Restoration Decade Alliance member groups, with a focus on restoration of key habitats and strategic linkages between habitats;
9. Recommence and fund implementation of the National Wildlife Corridors Plan and re-establish Australia's global leadership in connectivity conservation by adopting the [IUCN's criteria](#) for formal designation of connectivity conservation areas;
10. Integrate Indigenous Traditional Ecological and Cultural Knowledge into western environmental science and practice, and expand the Indigenous Rangers Program;
11. Ensure information and case studies on the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration are embedded in the Australian Schools Curriculum for 2022 and the remainder of the Decade.

Who is Australia's Restoration Decade Alliance?

The Restoration Decade Alliance (see [website](#)) aspires to work with governments, industry and community to:

1. Reinforce and clarify our common purpose to help conserve and restore Australian ecosystems;
2. Promote public awareness of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration as a focal opportunity for integrated restorative action and engagement of all sectors of society;
3. Promote and build capacity for best practice ecosystem restoration;
4. Create a mechanism for a united voice that effectively communicates the goals of the UN Decade, and;
5. Undertake advocacy and encouragement to support conservation and restoration activities.

Restoration Decade Alliance foundation member organisations supporting this submission:

[Aboriginal Biodiversity Conservation Foundation](#)

[Australian Association of Bush Regenerators](#)

[Australian Coastal Restoration Network](#)

[Australian Network for Plant Conservation](#)

[Bush Heritage Australia](#)

[Gondwana Link](#)

[Global EverGreening Alliance](#)

[Greening Australia Ltd.](#)

[Great Eastern Ranges](#)

[Invasive Species Council](#)

[Landcare Australia Ltd.](#)

[National Landcare Network](#)

[Restore Australia](#)

[Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia](#)

[The Nature Conservancy](#)

[WWF-Australia](#)



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