



Australian restoration organisations supporting the
United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
2021 - 2030

MEDIA RELEASE

From: Restoration Decade Alliance

Title: Leading environmental organisations call for national roadmap to accelerate ecosystem restoration

Date: 29th September, 2023

Leading environmental organisations call for national roadmap to accelerate ecosystem restoration

September 29 2023: An alliance of 21 leading Australian environmental organisations is calling for a national plan for ecosystem restoration to guide and accelerate action to reverse environmental degradation, curb biodiversity loss, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The Restoration Decade Alliance has issued a Statement off the back of the 10th World Conference on Ecological Restoration (SER2023) held in Darwin on 26-30 September as part of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030.

“Despite ongoing efforts, our ecosystems are continuing to deteriorate, and biodiversity is disappearing at an unprecedented rate in Australia and worldwide. We need to urgently accelerate and amplify our collective efforts to reverse ecosystem degradation and decline at the vast scale needed for nature and people,” says Dr Tein McDonald, Convener of the Restoration Decade Alliance.

Roughly half of Australia’s gross domestic product is dependent on nature, and ecosystem degradation has been shown to have direct and significant impacts on human health and social and cultural wellbeing.

“The Restoration Decade Alliance was formed to help meet these challenges, but we cannot do it alone. To date, restoration efforts in Australia have typically been short-term, disconnected, and relatively small-scale. This is inadequate to address the scale of the challenges we now face, but it’s not too late to turn things around,” says Dr McDonald.



Australian restoration organisations supporting the
United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
2021 - 2030

“The UN Decade calls on all levels of society and sectors – government, industry, First Nations Australians, and local communities – to work together to restore our ecosystems. We encourage the government to take the lead by developing an ambitious National Restoration Plan that serves as a clear roadmap for effective restoration and unites and empowers the whole-of-community.”

The RDA understands that genuine, early, and continuous involvement of First Nations Australians is fundamental to the success of the development and implementation of this restoration plan for Australia.

Professor Brendan Mackey from Griffith University says that restoration is also vital for helping Australia to meet its commitments to the Global Biodiversity Framework, UN Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement.

“We have a huge opportunity during the UN Decade to not just restore our ecosystems, but to reduce and remove the threats that continue to degrade them - such as feral animals, weeds, and unsustainable land and water management. We already have the science and on-ground experience, traditional knowledge, tools, and community needed in Australia to restore our ecosystems and maintain the essential functions they perform, such as carbon removal and storage, pollination, water filtration, and habitats for native wildlife. What we need now is substantial additional resourcing and a plan that draws all of those different components and people together to translate that into widespread action that fixes the problems faster than we are creating them.”

The restoration plan is required to provide a framework to guide ecosystem restoration in Australia across government, non-government, industry, First Nations communities, and local communities to ensure all investments are optimised to directly support Australia’s national commitments and drive nature-positive outcomes.

“People in communities across Australia have a high willingness to take action on the ground. What these communities need is a supportive framework, greater investment, and attractive incentives to scale up their efforts. Alongside this, we need to do better at communicating the benefits of reviving culture and restoring biodiversity, celebrating the wins so that people are motivated by a message of hope,” said Dr Kristin den Exter, Partnerships Manager of the National Landcare Network. “We have a chance to secure



Australian restoration organisations supporting the
United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
2021 - 2030

a sustained stewardship of Australian ecosystems and leave a legacy that lasts beyond this UN Decade.”

The Restoration Decade Alliance is also recommending that any government advisory panel tasked with identifying restoration targets and priorities includes independent ecosystem restoration experts. This Advisory Panel should include independent ecosystem restoration experts with long and successful experience in the restoration sector to optimise potential for successful outcomes that align with Australia’s national and global environmental and climate commitments.

The **full conference Statement** can be viewed at the following link and a Discussion Paper will be released in the near future.

<https://restorationdecadealliance.org/statement-from-ser2023/>

For more information please contact:

(Dr) Tein McDonald
Restoration Decade Alliance Convenor
0458 565 654