



HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

2010 Federal Election Policy Proposals - Biological Diversity and Climate Change

Regional Actions

- Commit to a dedicated fund for biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation projects in biodiversity *hotspot* countries in the Asia-Pacific region. A \$50 million *Regional Biodiversity Conservation Program* should be established over 3 years, allocating resources to key NGO on-ground projects in the region.¹

National Biodiversity Strategy and Funding

- Commit to the comprehensive implementation of a revised and strong *National Biodiversity Strategy* with timelines, targets and commitments and appropriate funding to match efforts required for target achievements. It is proposed that there be three funding tranches for this work:
 - *First, \$2m to be allocated in 2011- 2012 to complete preparation of a Commonwealth biodiversity strategy. Second;*
 - *\$20m over five years to fund a Biodiversity Policy and Coordination Branch, which as one of its main tasks would be to promote the achievement of biodiversity conservation goals through related Government policy areas eg domestic and international climate policy; and third;*
 - *\$50m over five years to fund high priority biodiversity tasks identified in the Commonwealth and National Strategies, for Commonwealth action.*
- Commit to a national terrestrial bioregional planning program to ensure cost-effective biodiversity protection strategies are in place across Australia - focusing particularly on EPBC *Matters of National Environmental Significance*. Establish a program through the development and implementation of *National Priorities for*

¹ *A Proposal for a Regional Biodiversity Conservation Program* (2009) Humane Society International.

Bioregional Conservation Strategies, guiding the expenditure of conservation resources in Australia's 85 bioregions - \$25 million over 6 years.²

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999

- Commit to amending the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, 1999* to significantly strengthen the protection it provides to biodiversity including:³
 - *Strengthened provisions for critical habitat and refugia protection and for bioregional planning (include critical habitats and refugia as an essential component of the National Reserve System).*
 - *Add new Matters of National Environmental Significance 'triggers' for vulnerable ecological communities, ecosystems of national importance, wetlands of national importance, critical habitats, the National Reserve System (including marine) and major new greenhouse gas emitting projects.*
 - *Restore the legal access rights of conservation organisations removed in 2006 amendments to bring 'merits appeals' for decisions relating to fisheries, wildlife trade and permits to harm threatened species and to expand merits appeals to decisions to impact Matters of National Environmental Significance.*
 - *Restore the nomination process removed in 2006 so that all public nominations for threatened species, ecological communities and threatening processes are duly assessed within prompt timeframes and to remove the unacceptably broad discretion to determine priority assessment lists.*
 - *Maintain and strengthen arrangements for the Environment Minister's accreditation of Commonwealth and export fisheries.*
- Commit to significantly increased funding to implement and enforce the EPBC Act, including substantial new funds to implement recovery plans for threatened species and ecological communities, bioregional plans, conservation agreements and critical habitat and refugia protection. \$100 million over 5 years.
- Commit to assessing all outstanding Heritage National List nominations by HSI.⁴

² Sattler, P (2006) *Future Proofing Australia – Bioregional Conservation Strategies Component*, Humane Society International – Presented at Department of the Environment seminar of biodiversity priorities.

³ Beynon, N., Kennedy, M., Graham, A. and Wellbelove, A. (2010) *Return of the Grumpy Old Greenies*. EDO 25th Anniversary National Conference - "Public Interest Law in Australia – 25 years on".

- Establish a comprehensive list of national priorities for the listing of threatened ecological communities before the end of 2010, dedicating \$50 million for the assessment and listing of all priority places over a 5 year period.

Miscellaneous biodiversity program components

- Commit to enhancing *stewardship payments* programs under national biodiversity program delivery arrangements to an amount of \$300m over five years - made available to help landholders protect remnant and other native vegetation types. *Priority should be given to critically endangered and endangered EPBC listed ecological communities*, located in the Commonwealth's recognised 15 national biodiversity *hotspot* areas.
- Commit to prioritising the assessment of the dingo as a threatened species and developing an EPBC Act Recovery Plan and/or Wildlife Conservation Plan⁵
- Commit to the development of a comprehensive *Wildlife Conservation Plan for Bats*, with special emphasis on EPBC listed species.
- Instigate a "*National Avian Conservation Program*" to comprehensively respond to a continuing decline in large numbers of endemic Australian bird species.

Marine Conservation

- In the context of the development of *Australia's National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas*, commit to identifying and listing the known critical habitats of all threatened marine species on the EPBC Act *Register of Critical Habitats* and to protecting them from threatening processes through the suite of tools available in the EPBC Act (including the ongoing marine bioregional planning process) and new strengthened EPBC provisions.⁶
- Place a moratorium on new oil and gas approvals in Australian waters until the safety issues associated with deepwater drilling have been addressed.⁷
- Commit to introducing urgent mitigation measures to prevent the bycatch of seabirds in Australian trawl fisheries.⁸

⁴ Cooper Creek, Paroo River, Coral Sea, Barrow Island, Cape York Peninsula, Great Western Woodlands, Lake Eyre, Brisbane Water & Bouddi National Parks, Australian Antarctic Territory & EEZ, Great Western Tiers.

⁵ Nomination to list the dingo as an "*endangered*" species under the EPBC Act, 1999. HSI, 2010.

⁶ Gibson, L.E. and Wellbelove, A.P. (2010) *Protecting Critical Marine Habitats: The key to conserving our threatened marine species*. An HSI and WWF Report.

⁷ "*Oil spill risk makes marine protection a federal election issue*". Press release on behalf of 33 Australian conservation organisations, 21/6/10.

⁸ Letter to Minister Burke and Minister Garrett re *Albatross deaths in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector*, May 11th, 2010, Humane Society International.

- Commit to an end to targeted shark fishing in Australia, for both commercial and recreational fishing.⁹
- Commit to tasking the TSSC (and state counterparts) with the urgent assessment of all shark species found in Australia to determine their conservation status and eligibility for listing as threatened species under the EPBC Act and state threatened species laws.¹⁰

International Fisheries/Trade

- Commit to calling for all Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations to adopt a mandatory sink rate/line weighting regime for their longline fisheries to prevent albatross and petrel bycatch.¹¹
- Commit to calling for all Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations to adopt a shark “fins naturally attached” policy and limits and prohibitions on retention of shark species.¹²
- Commit to nominating shark species for protection at the next Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
- Commit to reform of the Rules of Procedures of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species to increase the transparency of voting at future Conference of Parties and to increase NGO participation.
- Commit to full support of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks including the funding and implementation of the MoU and the subsequent conservation plan.

Whales and Whaling

- Maintain a policy for a permanent global ban on all commercial whaling.
- Commit to supporting the ongoing legal action against Japan’s ‘scientific’ whaling program in the International Court of Justice, initiated in May 2010.

⁹ “*Shark Conservation – Policy Recommendations for the Australian Government*”. (2009) Humane Society International.

¹⁰ “*Shark Conservation – Policy Recommendations for the Australian Government*”. (2009) Humane Society International.

¹¹ *Views Paper* presented by Humane Society International at the international *Kobe II Bycatch Workshop*, Brisbane, June, 2010.

¹² *Views Paper* presented by Humane Society International at the international *Kobe II Bycatch Workshop*, Brisbane, June, 2010.

- Commit to enforcement of the Federal Court injunction against Japanese whalers, obtained as a result of HSI's court case, which found that Japanese whale hunts in Australia's Antarctic territorial waters are in breach of Australian law.
- Commit to developing a national network of whale and dolphin sanctuaries.

Climate Change - domestic and international policy

- Commit to a *Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)* policy that would see funding prioritised towards the protection of intact natural forests and other carbon rich ecosystems and restoration of degraded natural forests and other carbon rich natural ecosystems, ahead of subsidies for logging and reforestation.
- Commit to legislation, pending the introduction of an ETS, that:
 - *Imposes mandatory criteria for the protection of intact native forests in regard to Australian entities that import offset credits derived from reduced deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+);*
 - *Provides for a voluntary terrestrial/green carbon market by using the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) infrastructure of section 10 and 11a of the Bill as well as the National Carbon Offset Standard for terrestrial /green carbon activities not covered in those CPRS sections eg use of international voluntary carbon standards.¹³*
- Commit to a policy to promote full land based accounting for REDD and other terrestrial carbon strategies in both the Australian and international context – so that the reporting of emissions and sequestration from the terrestrial carbon sector cannot be 'cherry picked'.
- Commit to a policy of maximising the biodiversity benefits of REDD and terrestrial carbon strategies that the Government will pursue in the Australian and international context.
- Commit to instituting an immediate ban on the importation of illegally and ecologically unsustainably logged timber.

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¹³ *Proposals for Green Carbon Climate Change Initiatives Comprising: Transitional climate change and forests protection legislation and associated budget funded measures.* (2010) Humane Society International.